

South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District
Special Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes
October 20, 2025 - **AMENDED**

Present:	Jim Albee, Chair	John Curtis, Fire Chief
	Renee Anderson, Vice Chair	Mike Dell'Orfano, Chief Govt. Affairs Officer
	William Shriver, Treasurer	Kristin Eckmann, Deputy Chief – Community Services
	Sue Roche, Secretary	Matt Weller, Deputy Chief – Internal Services
	Kevin Leung	Jake Mayhew, Deputy Chief - Operations
	Rich Sokol	Stephanie Corbo, CFO – Business Services
	Phil McCart	Camie Chapman, CHRO – Internal Services
		Allison Ulmer, Legal Counsel

Others Present: SMFR Staff, Citizens

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Chair Albee called the Special Meeting of the South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

ROLL CALL

All of the Board members were present in person.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Director Anderson motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Director Shriver seconded the motion. 7 in favor, 0 opposed. The motion carried.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

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

- Director McCart – no changes
- Director Roche – no changes
- Director Anderson – no changes
- Chair Abee – no changes
- Director Shriver – no changes
- Director Leung – no changes
- Director Sokol – no changes

PUBLIC COMMENT

N/A

CONSENT AGENDA

N/A

ACTION ITEMS

1. **Radio Repeater Purchase Request** – Chief Dell'Orfano stated this item, intended to improve radio communications in the Station 21 area, was withdrawn and will become a part of the 2026 Proposed Budget discussion.

DISCUSSION/POTENTIAL ACTION ITEMS

1. **Amendments to the September 1, 2023 Restated Bylaws** – Chief Dell'Orfano brought this forward as a discussion item as recommended change by the Board Bylaws Committee who have reviewed the September 1, 2023 Restated

Bylaws and has proposed several amendments. These changes are recommended in order to provide guidance on the types of absences from a board meeting, the process for classifying an absence, and updating current meeting agenda practices.

At Chair Albee's request, Legal Counsel Ulmer stated that a rescheduled regular meeting would still be called a regular meeting.

At Director Roche's request, Director Leung stated that the law states that 4 consecutive unexcused absences constitute the potential for a vacancy. At Director Roche's request, Chief Dell'Orfano stated that a board member could have an unexcused absence every other meeting and cannot be removed for that reason.

At Director Sokol's request, Chief Dell'Orfano stated that the Board can overturn an unexcused absence at the following meeting if the Board member had an emergency and was unable to provide notification that they are unable to attend. After discussion the Board agreed that depending on subsequent information obtained the unexcused absence could be overturned.

Chair Albee asked about an unexcused absence for vacation once the meetings schedule is set. After discussion, it was agreed that vacation will be a part of the excused absence language.

Chief Dell'Orfano stated that Staff will change the wording and bring it back for approval at the November 10th meeting.

2. **Proposed 2026 Budget (No new Property Tax Revenue)** – CFO Corbo distributed packets for both budgets and explained it is the same presentation that was emailed on 10/15/25 and provided an in-depth overview of the budget with no new property tax revenue.

At Director Sokol's request, CFO Corbo reviewed the Director positions and funds that are needed as the State of Colorado and SMFR, two tax-exempt organizations, create a third HOA organization for the Mineral Building. As a Director for the HOA, she will be working with the State to create a funding structure to oversee the maintenance of the building.

At Director Leung's request, CHRO Chapman stated that with the overall benchmarking, we are right in line with the public sector for salaries. Staff has tried to get numbers from the agencies that we compare to but that is difficult to obtain. Staff will bring back some benchmarking information when we do the deeper dive at the November 10th meeting. Chair Albee noted that the salaries include overtime so are inflated so we need to use the correct common denominator. At Director Sokol's request, CHRO Chapman will make sure that there is a breakout of the salaries + overtime for the Line (union contract employees) and Staff (non-union contract employees).

At Director Sokol's request, CHRO Chapman stated that open enrollment is in November and Staff should know the numbers for each benefit plan by the first of December.

At Chair Albee's request, CFO Corbo stated that the work has not been done yet to determine what the actual self-insured fund balance should be. CHRO Chapman added that staff has been monitoring it and we are under the threshold of what the Board directed & Staff will bring back that information at the November 10th meeting.

3. **2026 Budget Workshop (Additional Property Tax Revenue Discussion)** – Chief Curtis stated Staff wants to make sure that we are talking about the items that we advocated to our constituents, how we reframe what was just presented as a fully loaded budget & the Board's philosophy on what they want to see if we have the additional property tax revenue and tying the budget to the strategic plan.

CFO Corbo opened the discussion on a 2026 budget that does include additional property tax revenue, with key initiatives including re-engaging on capital investments, Staff and Line personnel hiring, and additional operating expenses.

At Director Leung's request, Budget Manager Smith stated that the recruits are coming on Line and the increase in staffing should help overtime for the future. Chief Curtis added that Staff took a shot at the shortages of Line personnel in certain ranks, so this was a shift to sort overtime into the right bucket. This is the first time we have seen shortages, and it relates to not having academies as far back as during COVID. Alternate response staffing is to mitigate calls and move people in different directions, different from our model today, to improve service but may not have an impact on overtime. Director Leung asked for a breakdown of each category (command level, mid-level Lieutenant and Captain, and rank & file level) so the Board can have a better understanding of where the overtime is going.

Director Shriver stated he recalls several Board members wanted to forgo the abatements if we get the additional revenue. Director Leung stated that he believes that should change because we will still not have enough funds to do everything we want to do. Director Sokol stated that he believes the actual revenue will be more than what is reflected in these spreadsheets. Director Leung reminded that we never know what the State will do with the property taxes. CFO Corbo informed that the removal of the abatements over the next 10 years brings us into the red in 2030 rather than 2031. A poll of the Board resulted in 4 Directors (Sokol, Shriver, Anderson, Albee) voting to remove the abatements from the presentation on November 10th if the election is successful.

CFO summarized the Board's direction:

- Leave the Staff FTE placeholder in the budget. Director Leung requested information on Overtime by Rank. He asked where the positions are planned to be added and CFO Corbo expressed that they would be a part of the strategic planning process.
- Leave the Alternate Response Staffing placeholder in the budget.
- Leave the Operating Plan - \$500K Professional Development placeholder in the budget.
- Set the General Fund Capital Transfer at \$26M; once the Board designates a project in Parker, the Parker Excise Tax will be assigned to the project.

Chief Weller provided a Capital Projects – with revenue 10-Year Plan, Facility Overview with more detailed information about station renovations/rebuilds, training facility, fleet/logistics relocation.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- Chief Curtis:
 - Introduced Dawn Poe as the new Assistant to the Fire Chief. There were over 50 applicants, 9 finalists and 5 were interviewed. Dawn shined brightly throughout the process & excited for her to begin transitioning into her new position.
- Chief Dell'Orfano:
 - Thanked Director Anderson, Chair Albee and his wife Sara for participating in the Adopt A Highway event last weekend. There is one more on November 8th, for anyone interested, and that will be it for the season.
 - Most of the Board members have received their maximum pay of \$2,400 for the year.
- Chief Eckmann:
 - Transitioning to a new vendor for our website next year as Staff found some efficiencies in cost and platform. A survey was sent out via email requesting ideas for improvement of the website.
 - Several media inquiries have come in about the ballot measure. Chair Albee and Local 2086's Brent Chapman have agreed to navigate these. Channel 4, Fox 31 and 7 have done stories regarding our ballot measure.
- Local 2086 President Dzengelewski:
 - Local is busy supporting the upcoming campaign. A watch party will take place at the Union Hall on election night.
- Chief Everitt:

- Deputy Fire Marshal Rich Conroy was selected as the Fire Prevention Officer of the Year by the Fire Marshals Association of Colorado.
- Director McCart:
 - He has been spending quite a bit of time watching the department's podcasts & thinks it is a great way to get exposure to the organization.
- Director Anderson:
 - Tower 18 looks like it is working really well. They ended up behind her the other day and since she had her support 7A sticker on her car she had to wave to them.
- Director Leung:
 - The organizers of the Indivisible Project, who hosted a Highlands Ranch event on Saturday, October 18th expressed their deep gratitude for the outstanding work of the Station 17 crew handling the two-car collision that occurred between 2:00 and 2:30 p.m. The professionalism and composure demonstrated by Station 17 firefighters and EMS personnel throughout the incident were exemplary and reminded everyone how fortunate our community is to be served by such dedicated South Metro professionals.
 - When talking to voters in the last few weeks, Director Leung has been approached about what can be done to reduce the risk of a wildfire.
- Director Sokol:
 - The assessment rates for local governments go down if property rates grow by more than 5% a year. The overall state average is 4.7% for 2026 calculations and expected to be less than 5% going into 2027.
- Chair Albee:
 - Reminded that the November 3rd meeting was moved to November 10th and another meeting was added on November 17th.
 - A neighbor of his is excited to support our ballot measure & he has property in Grand Lake, so he helped review their ballot. Their fire district is going for 4 mills, waiver of the property tax limit (cap), and the ability to float the mill levy.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Albee adjourned the meeting at 8:48 p.m.

Attested by: James L. Albee

Date: 11/10/2025