

South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District
Regular Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes
October 6, 2025

Present:	Jim Albee, Chair	John Curtis, Fire Chief (via Teams)
	Renee Anderson, Vice Chair	Mike Dell'Orfano, Chief Govt. Affairs Officer (absent)
	William Shriver, Treasurer (via Teams)	Jake Mayhew, Deputy Chief– Emergency Services
	Sue Roche, Secretary	Kristin Eckmann, Deputy Chief – Community Services
	Kevin Leung	Matt Weller, Deputy Chief – Internal Services
	Rich Sokol	Stephanie Corbo, Chief Financial Officer
	Phil McCart	Camie Chapman, Chief Human Resources Officer
		Bob Cole, Legal Counsel

Others Present: SMFR Staff Members & citizens

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Chair Albee called the Regular Meeting of the South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District to order at 6:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Albee led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL

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

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Director Roche motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Director McCart seconded the motion. 7 were 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 Albee- no changes
- Director Shriver – no changes
- Director Sokol – no changes
- Director Leung – no changes

PUBLIC COMMENT

N/A

PROCLAMATION

1. **2025-04 a Proclamation by South Metro Fire Rescue Board of Directors in Recognition of Fire Prevention Week – October 5 – 11, 2025** – Chief Eckmann informed that SMFR has observed Fire Prevention Week for several years, which observed each year during the week of October 9th in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire, which began on October 8, 1871, and caused devastating damage, killing more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures, and burned more than 2,000 acres of land. In 1925, President Calvin Coolidge proclaimed Fire Prevention week a national observance, where children, adults and teachers learn how to stay safe

in case of fire. Firefighters provide lifesaving public education in an effort to drastically reduce casualties caused by fire.

Community Risk Reduction Specialist Colleen Potton expressed her excitement that this is a recognition across the country and in Canada. This year's theme is Buy, Charge, and Recycle focusing on the safe use and disposal of lithium-ion batteries. The CRRS Team began social meeting posts on Sunday and they will continue throughout the week, as well as providing internal communications & encouraging the community to visit the website and look for more information.

Director Anderson stated that she would appreciate hearing about additional updates as they are available.

At Director McCart's request, CRRS Potton will get contact information for the lobbyists who are working to get laws in place regarding battery safety.

Director Leung read the proclamation which was adopted by the Board.

Director Anderson stated that she would be interested to hear about it if there are additional updates.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. 09/08/25 South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District Regular Meeting Minutes

Director Sokol motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Director Leung seconded the motion. 7 were in favor, 0 opposed. The motion carried.

DISCUSSION/POTENTIAL ACTION ITEMS

1. Budget Discussion

a. 2026 Draft Budget Presentation

CFO Corbo thanked Budget Manager Mike Smith and FP&A Analyst Ryan Baudoin for helping put together the information for tonight's presentation, noting that this is a draft of the budget so if there are no changes tonight, this is the budget that will be presented for approval. The budget overview included:

- Discussed Changes from 9/15 Budget Workshop
- Presented 2026 Proposed Budget
- Discussion Topics
 - Timeline
 - Abatement
 - Salary & Benefit Costs
 - Key Impacts to Workforce Plan & Long-Term Plan
 - No new hires of Line or Staff included in 2026 budget proposal, except where deemed essential
 - 3.5% Compensation Increase
 - Overtime
 - Permanent Reductions
- Next Steps

Chair Albee recommended that the fees match the increased costs. Director Sokol concurred, noting that this approach should be applied consistently across all categories whenever possible.

Director Anderson asked what the proper message should be if members of the public or staff inquire about the change, to ensure a unified response. The agreed-upon explanation is that the current fee structure only recovers approximately 70% of actual costs, and the proposed fee adjustments are intended to align more closely with rising expenses, particularly those driven by compensation increases. This ensures transparency and consistency

in communicating that the fee changes are a necessary step to maintain service quality and financial sustainability.

CFO Corbo confirmed with the Board that they would like the 3.5% increase to be carried forward for the fee schedules.

CFO Corbo reported that Korn Ferry, the company that the District uses to assess Staff salaries, recommends a 3.5% increase for both Line and Staff. Line attrition is 30 people, which is reflected as 50% paramedics and 50% firefighters. Staff attrition is about 12, only ½ of those salaries were accounted for because not everyone leaves on January 1st.

Director Leung expressed concern over the almost 9% increase in benefits. CHRO Chapman stated that in total compensation, we are in pretty good shape as employer of choice & that insurance claims fluctuating from year-to-year is a factor, so Staff is looking at all aspects of the bigger picture to maintain the desired employer of choice.

CFO Corbo provided an overview of the 2026 Proposed Budget Comparison, including & recommendations after discussion:

- Budget Timeline & Assumptions
 - Email budget to the Board by the October 13th deadline
 - Legal Counsel is comfortable that this is in compliance
 - Budget to be posted on the website
 - Chief Eckmann to confirm working on ADA compliance with post on website
 - Move the start time of the October 20th meeting to 4:00 p.m.
 - Does not work for Directors McCart and Roche, so the start time will not be changed
 - Property Tax Abatement – Discussion Item
 - Move the November 3rd meeting to November 10th
 - Verify with Chief Dell’Orfano that will work with the planned agenda items
 - Present the budget and adopt it after we know the election results
 - Add a November 17th meeting
- Revenues
 - Components of Property Taxes Actual Property Value by County
 - Property Taxes
 - Additional Revenue Categories
- Expenses
 - Components of Total Salaries
 - Components of Benefits
 - Director Albee requested reflection of difference between budget and forecast
 - Overtime Breakdown
 - Operating Expenses
 - Permanent Reductions
 - Director Leung suggested, and Board agreed to keep the \$400K as a placeholder for a 2026 revenue ballot item in the budget if 7A doesn’t pass
 - CFO Corbo will work with Chief Dell’Orfano to determine the actual election cost and place that in the no-revenue budget
 - 2026 Capital Expense Requests
 - Long-Term Plan
 - Budget Timeline and Next Steps
 - Contingent Reductions - these would be reinstated if the ballot passes.

ACTION ITEMS

- 1. SMFR Resolution No. 2025-06 A Resolution Advocating Voter Approval of South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District's Ballot Initiative 7A During the November 4, 2025 Election** – Vice Chair Anderson stated that some entities were offered the opportunity to provide support for our ballot initiative. HRMD did vote on a resolution in support, so she wanted to offer the opportunity to our own board if they wanted to do something similar. Just an additional effort to gain support.

Board members listed several entities that have passed similar letters/resolutions of support & reasoning behind some not doing so with the philosophy that it does not affect their entity.

Director Anderson opened a discussion regarding whether or not to table this if we do not have 100 percent board member support.

Director McCart suggested adding something addressing that 30 percent of the calls are to business and that the percentage increase is approximately the same as the proposed percent increase.

Director Leung motioned to support SMFR Resolution No. 2025-06 A Resolution Advocating Voter Approval of South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District's Ballot Initiative 7A During the November 4, 2025 Election as presented. Director Roche seconded the motion. 6 were in favor, 1 opposed (Sokol). The motion carried.

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. IGA Update – N/A

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

- **CFO Corbo:**
 - There are two RFPs open for a Pension Investment Advisor & Inventory Management Software for Logistics.
- **Chief Eckmann:**
 - An all-personnel meeting is planned for whatever way the election goes. May ask one or two Board members to help with the message that goes out to the organization.
- **Local 2086 Representative Joe Sims:**
 - There were 4-5 EV fires in Sacramento & there are some interesting articles with a lot of documentation on this new phenomenon.
 - Represented at the Fallen Firefighters Memorial in Colorado Springs last month.
 - Today, he, Chief Goedeker and 15 Line members went to the immigration office where one of our firefighters became a citizen.
- **Director McCart:**
 - He had the pleasure of meeting two of the figures in the SMFR legacy, Kelly Stahlman, she seems to be doing very well considering and made his feelings about taking Bruce's spot really come to the surface & met Cindy Hathaway for coffee and learned how well she was also treated by the Firefighters. He expressed appreciation for how the Line and Staff have treated him. He thanked the Chiefs for letting him ride in a rig down to the memorial.
- **Director Anderson:**
 - She had the opportunity to lunch with some of the Douglas County Mayors and had occasion to have lunch with some of the DC mayors and Mayor Josh Rivero is very pleased with the way the plan reviews are going in Parker.
- **Director Leung:**
 - Thank you to the CHRO Chapman and the Wellness Team for hosting the wellness fair. There were great health check and education opportunities, and he loved seeing the puppies.
- **Director Sokol:**
 - Thanked Chief Burke for the ride-along with Tower 32 last week. It was an incredibly different way to see the organization and how things work in the field. Two big takeaways, the intricacies, complexity and professionalism of our personnel when responding to a fire & impressed by the debrief by the crew on the ride back to the station from a fire.
- **Chief Curtis:**

- In the process of recruiting a replacement for the Assistant to the Fire Chief. There have been lots of applicants and the interviews will take place during the week of the 13th.
- Recent podcasts posted on behavioral health & an update from the Deputy & Fire Chiefs.
- Attended an ACSO press conference on their participation in the Blue Envelope Program, which we will be partnering with and educating our workforce in support.
- Thank you to Director McCart for attending the memorial & Director Sokol for doing a ride-along to get a perspective on what our Line employees do every day.
- Chair Albee:
 - Kickoff meeting on Thursday for the Strategic Plan with the consultant.
 - Alumni lunch is on October 29th at Station 15.
 - Director Leung provided some interesting information from the SDA conference that looks like good information. Director Leung stated that Chair Albee and Vice Chair Anderson did an awesome job presenting an overview of our recent Fire Chief selection process & there was a lot of other useful information provided.
- Thank you, letters/notes:
 - Thank you note from Kuman Math & Reading Center of Lone Tree to Fire Inspector Dylan Sickler for doing a great job during the inspection, answering all of the questions and giving good advice on fire prevention.
 - Thank you letter from Mountain View Fire Rescue's Fire Chief Valdez to Chief Curtis extending his sincerest gratitude for assistance in covering their district during the funeral of their own Engineer Eric Losh.
 - Thank you note from Highlands Ranch Community Association to Chief Dell'Orfano for providing an update on SMFR during their meeting, providing much appreciated insight and leadership.
 - Thank you note from the Denver Seminary to the Fire Marshal's Team by helping get their event by pushing through the permits and inspection, particularly Dan Russell, Brad Gleason and Heidi Vinduska.
 - Compliments received from the website:
 - Thank you note to Dispatch for instructing a citizen's wife through CPR until the crews from Station 12, Medic 15 and Med 2 arrived and took over the life-saving efforts.
 - Thank you note to various stations for quick response to a grass fire in The Farm at Arapahoe County Open Space.
 - Thank you note to the crew who went above and beyond for a citizen who had an incident while doing yardwork.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

N/A

NEXT MEETINGS

Special Board of Directors' Meeting to be held on October 20, 2025, 6:00 p.m. at 9195 East Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO.

South Metro Fire Rescue Volunteer Firefighter Board of Trustees' Meeting to be held on November 3, 2025, 6:00 p.m., at 9195 East Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO.

Regular Board of Directors' Meeting to be held on November 3, 2025, 6:00 p.m. at 9195 East Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Albee adjourned the meeting at 8:49 p.m.

Attested by: 

Date: 11/10/2025