

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a regular board meeting on January 15, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Dowden.

Directors present: N. Dowden/K. Tarvainen/J. Hinton/J. Abendschan/C. Behnken

Directors absent: None

Also present: Dan Petersen Consulting & Coaching/Chiefs Bartlett and Rocco/R. Dunn/L. Emry/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel/community members

**Roll Call:** All directors were present.

**Minutes** A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes for the December 4, 2024 regular board meeting with two amendments, as follows – on page 2, in the fifth paragraph, delete “annual accrual rate” and replace with “a maximum carryover accrued rate”. Also, in the Future Meetings paragraph, correct the date to January 15, 2025. Upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously to adopt the December 4, 2024 minutes as amended.

Terry Stokka, director of Friends of Black Forest, was present and requested time on the agenda to introduce information on a new community initiative aimed at assisting elderly, handicapped and other Black Forest citizens with small maintenance projects around their homes. The “Hands and Feet” program will be administered by Dawn Coy-Medeiros who will assign volunteers to assess needs. Printed information will be made available covering the details of the program, and may be distributed by fire department personnel.

**Financial Reports** The financial report was given by Treasurer Hinton, that included information from the November time period, as well as December. The delay in reporting financial information was due to timing of board meetings earlier than normal and the unavailability of financial data. The November bank account total was \$2.9m and the carryover at year end was \$2.18m, the liability package was paid off early, and there were some changes to the budget that were less than 10%, which negated the need for a budget amendment. **Upon a motion, second, and vote, the financial report for November was approved. Upon a motion, second, and vote, the financial report for December 2024 data was accepted.**

Chair Dowden reported there was a meeting with bank representatives that precipitated some action. **A motion was made directing that an accountant working for the District, Jacob Thornberry, is authorized to view account information only, but may not be a signatory on accounts; motion was seconded; a vote carried the motion unanimously.** For information purposes, the minutes will reflect that the following District personnel are authorized signers on Black Forest Fire District accounts – Jack Hinton, Nathan Dowden, James Abendschan, Josh Bartlett, Kerstin Tarvainen, Chad Behnken, and David Rocco.

**Operations Report** A written report was prepared and given to all directors. A copy is attached to the minutes.

Finance and Administrative – Section Lead Rachel Dunn:

- Notable expense – insurance renewal for 2025 \$91,881.
- Expense – 2025 ESO renewal \$6,852.
- Expense – Lexipol annual dues \$10,855.
- Hours worked – 7,285 hours (214 hours OT, no deployments).

Logistics & Planning – Section Lead Rachel Dunn:

- Fleet management – warranty and general service.
- Working on building out Type 6s.
- New flooring in chief’s office.
- Cloud project was finalized.

Type 6 work is behind schedule – March may be the finish date for the first one. No offers have been received for purchase of the aerial. The tender at Hanover has been winterized and is being stored outside. Discussion on ability to deploy vehicles and staff.

Operations Report – Chief Josh Bartlett

- 606.5 hours of training, working on certifications.
- BFFD personnel attended Mile High Firefighters Conference, one as an instructor.

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a regular board meeting on December 10, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair K. Tarvainen.  
Directors present: K. Tarvainen/T. Joyce/N. Dowden/J. Tarvainen/J. Abendschan via Zoom  
Directors absent: None  
Also present: Chief Rocco/R. Dunn/L. Emry/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel

**Roll Call:** All directors were present. A quorum was declared.

**Agenda Approval:** A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

**Minutes** A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes for the November 19, 2025 regular board meeting; the motion carried unanimously.

**Operations Reports** A written report was prepared and given to all directors. A copy is attached to the minutes.

**Finance and Administrative – Section Lead Lisa Emry:**

- Notable revenues – property tax N/A; ambulance revenue - \$6966.
- Notable expenses – MDC mounts \$2443; 2 sets bunker gear \$8100; honor guard uniforms \$1307.
- Hours worked – 5,974 (394 hours OT, deployments and backfill 0 hours).

**Logistics and Planning – Section Lead Rachel Dunn:**

**Fleet Management (Gavin Smith)**

- 741 fuel leak repair \$12,000.

**Facilities**

- Station 1 – exercise equipment, cabinets.
- Stations 1 and 2 – new desktop computers.

**Deployment**

- Nothing to report.

**Planning**

- MFD/BFFD MOU signed today.

**Chief Rocco Operations Report**

- 104 total calls - 3 fire calls, 50 EMS calls, 51 other, 544 training hours.
- Ten applicants for DC position, closes 12/15 with interviews week of 1/5/26.
- Strong interest in VEMS; basic testing will follow.
- Oil drums are gone.

**Old Business**

Impact fees – Movement on this issue is continuing, working on a capital improvement plan.

2026 budget – a budget outline was provided with a brief overview of each line item, noting a final accounting adjustment from the County on the assessed valuation of the district to \$309,405,940.

The 2026 Wage and Leave Schedule was presented with some changes noted, and including COLA. A motion was made and seconded to adopt for approval Resolution 2025-02, Resolution to Adopt 2026 Budget, including all budget items and the mill levy certification; motion carried unanimously.

**A motion was made and seconded to approve the Wage and Leave Schedule for 2026; motion carried unanimously.**

**A motion was made and seconded to approve the fee schedule for the district; motion carried unanimously.**

**A motion was made and seconded to approve the board of directors 2026 meeting schedule; motion carried unanimously.** Meetings will be held the second Wednesday of each month, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

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The newly opened money market account documents require signatures and driver license numbers of all directors.

The employee group elected Brian Knipe as the new president as of January 2026.

### **New Business**

Resolution 2025-01, to adopt the 2021 edition of the International Fire Code (2021 IFC) and the Colorado Wildfire Resilience Code (CWRC) was reviewed, facilitated by a power point and input from Treasurer Tom Joyce, who led the discussion. Mr. Joyce described the adoption process and implementation of the fire code to be followed. The background and need for the updated fire code were explained, noting the need for consistency in a county-wide program that addresses wildfire risk-reduction and wildland urban interface (WUI) regulatory codes. Some modifications in language were suggested by Director Dowden and incorporated. The details of this resolution 2025-01 and the subsequent adoption process, are presented in an 80 plus-page document, which will be posted on the BFFR website and will be available to the public. **A motion was made to adopt Resolution 2025-01, as presented and amended, for the purpose of adopting the 2021 edition of the International Fire Code and the Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code, as amended, regulating and governing conditions hazardous to life and property from fire, explosion, and wildfire; including Appendices A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, and O, and as amended by this Resolution and Exhibit A (Local IFC Amendments); the motion was seconded; the motion carried unanimously.**

Board Member Reports: Chair Tarvainen noted that she and Chief Rocco met with the Monument chair to discuss future operations of the two departments.

Correspondence: None reported.

Public Comment: None.

Future Meetings: The next regular board meeting will be held on January 14, at 5:30 p.m.

Adjournment: There being no further business, **upon a motion, second, and unanimous vote, the board adjourned at 8:16 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Arkowski  
Recording Secretary

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a regular board meeting on February 19, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Dowden.

Directors present: N. Dowden/K. Tarvainen/J. Hinton/J. Abendschan/C. Behnken (via Zoom)

Directors absent: None

Also present: Kevin Walker, COS Planning Director/Chief Rocco/R. Dunn/L. Emry/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel/community members

**Roll Call:** All directors were present.

**Minutes A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes for the January 15, 2025 regular board meeting; motion seconded; upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Kevin Walker, Planning Director for Colorado Springs, presented information concerning the process utilized by the City for annexing adjacent property. Mr. Walker explained that state statute requires municipalities to develop how annexation of property would be considered within a three-mile area outside the city borders or enclaves surrounded by the City. The program monitors all the area involved within this zone and the suitability for potential annexation, but only if the property owner wants it annexed. The City has no intentions of initiating the annexation of any property. The El Paso County Master Plan identifies areas suitable for development, and most of Black Forest is not suitable, except for the planned hotel in Flying Horse North.

**Financial Reports** The financial report was given by Treasurer Hinton, advising that the bookkeeping company has just recently downloaded the 2025 budget, so a financial report is not yet available. Current bank balances are \$2,230,309, and 2025 property taxes receivable total is \$4,969,010. Mr. Hinton will clarify that BFFD bank account balances are fully insured. Discussed ending current association with The Accounting Office, due to dissatisfaction with work results. **A motion was made to investigate working with a new accounting firm, Public Alliance LLC. and utilizing the services of Rachel Dunn and Lisa Emry for in-house accounting duties; motion seconded; discussion; motion carried.**

**Operations Report** A written report was prepared and given to all directors. A copy is attached to the minutes.

**Finance and Administrative – Section Lead Lisa Emry:**

- Hours worked – 7,297 hours (28 hours OT, no deployments).
- Tax revenue - \$113,440.
- Workers Comp final audit - \$34,449. EMR rate will be checked.
- SCBA gear grant \$180,283 plus \$18,028 from District funds to purchase gear.
- Turnout gear purchased at \$15,000.
- Will investigate working with Lexipol to enhance awareness of budget line-item manipulation.

**Logistics & Planning – Section Lead Rachel Dunn:**

- Gavin working on maintenance on tender and brush truck.
- Gavin continuing new brush truck build, and has 4 to 5 weeks remaining to completion.
- The Hanover truck has returned.
- Some facilities work at station 1.
- Annual alarm testing.

**Operations Report – Chief David Rocco**

- 818.5 hours of training, working on certifications.
- Several calls in district and assisting neighboring districts; car accidents due to snowy weather.
- Ice Rescue Course for all shifts.
- 63 calls in last month.
- EDARP participation at 100%.

**Old Business** The Aspen Meadows Filing No. 4 exclusion will not result in any loss of revenue to BFFD because there are no homes built in this area. Ms. Dunn and CEGRLaw personnel will facilitate the filing of the paperwork with the court system.

An update on the Dan Petersen Consulting needs analysis process reported there will be a community meeting/work session to receive input from citizens on February 24, 2025, 7 to 9 pm; and work sessions

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a regular board meeting on March 19, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Dowden.

Directors present: N. Dowden/K. Tarvainen/J. Hinton/J. Abendschan/C. Behnken (via Zoom)

Directors absent: None

Also present: Chief Rocco/Chief Bartlett/D. Petersen/R. Dunn/L. Emry/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel/community members

**Roll Call:** All directors were present.

**Minutes** **A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes for the February 19, 2025 regular board meeting; motion seconded; upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**Financial Reports** The financial report was given by Treasurer Hinton. Current assets are \$4,969,010, with further information pending. Mr. Hinton noted that some financial information is not available and will be finalized at a later date. **A motion was made to approve the financial report as received; motion seconded; motion carried.**

**Operations Report** A written report was prepared and given to all directors. A copy is attached to the minutes.

Finance and Administrative – Section Lead Lisa Emry:

- Annual audit is in progress, due for completion in a month.
- Public Alliance has submitted a scope of work for the district's consideration. This proposal has been reviewed by Attorney Glesne, who found it in order.
- Notable revenues in the past month - \$1,881,388 in tax receipts.
- Notable expenses -- ESO renewal \$5,560, District Needs Analysis \$13,875, station beds \$5,780.
- Hours worked – 6,779 hours (45 hours OT, no deployments).

Logistics & Planning – Section Lead Rachel Dunn:

- An employee cost analysis for the first three months was conducted.
- Power Point report on consideration of possible move to join another fire department, specifically Monument FD, and attempting to match department configurations. Three job descriptions were created in anticipation of BFFD personnel moving to MFD with updated wage levels. See attached for more information.
- Discussion on multiple vehicles – their current conditions and maintenance requirements, progress on trucks in progress, availability of deployment vehicles, issues regarding lack of storage space for vehicles.
- Wildland update – three teams being organized, with 20 Supplements in the program.
- SOCO – volunteer group has 50 members and supports wildland fire operations and training in Southern Colorado.
- Promotional exams being proposed.
- EMS billing report by FF Lucas noting that BFFD should be receiving more income in ambulance billing, and that he is working on improvements for this system.
- Board was queried on whether BFFD wishes to reinstitute a July 4 community picnic. Volunteers are required to prepare such an event. **A motion was made to hold a July 4 community picnic at the fire station grounds; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.** Appointing a subcommittee of board members for this event was tabled.

**Old Business**

Discussion with Attorney Glesne via Zoom: Board questioned Ms. Glesne re legal requirements for use of impact fees and sales tax collection. An impact fee may not be assessed against a development that was approved and built before the fee was instituted. Collection of a sales tax does not need to be specifically earmarked and may be included in the general fund. Further discussion of these subjects was tabled.

Concerning the proposed agreement with Public Alliance, LLC, Ms. Glesne has reviewed the legal document and approves of its content. Discussion highlighted problems with current accounting firm, noting that books are not up to date, Ms. Lisa Emry will be the point of contact with Public Alliance.

**A motion was made to approve the proposal presented by Public Alliance LLC on March 14, 2025, with the Independent Contractor Agreement included. Motion seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a regular board meeting on April 16, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Dowden.

Directors present: N. Dowden/K. Tarvainen/J. Hinton/J. Abendschan/C. Behnken

Directors absent: None

Also present: Chief Rocco/Chief Bartlett/D. Petersen/R. Dunn/L. Emry/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel/community members

**Roll Call:** All directors were present.

**Minutes A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes for the March 19, 2025 regular board meeting; motion seconded; upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**Motion to convene in executive session, pursuant to 24-6-402(4)(e) C.R.S. for the purpose of determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations relating to contracts for services and the position of fire chief; motion seconded; motion carried upon unanimous vote.** Board adjourned into executive session at 7:02 p.m.

The board reconvened in open session at 7:44 p.m. Chair Dowden stated the executive session discussion was limited to the stated purposes.

**Financial Reports** The financial report was given by Treasurer Hinton. Mr. Hinton suggested movement of some available cash into a money market account that allows withdrawals without penalty. **A motion was made to transfer \$139,948 into a money market account; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.** Current total liabilities and equity are \$8,552,059. With the hiring of a new accounting team in Public Alliance, LLC, financial reporting will change to include quarterly reports. Monthly reconciliations will continue to be included in financial reporting. Current spending is under budget because not all budgeted salaries are being paid. **A motion was made to endorse the use of quarterly financial reporting; motion was seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

**Operations Report** A written report was prepared and given to all directors. A copy is attached to the minutes.

**Chief Bartlett Report on new Type 6 Vehicle** Meeting moved to station bay to inspect new Type 6 vehicle and its attributes. It will be deployable and capable of producing revenue for the district from deployments. Truck could be used now in Black Forest, but needs additional appliances at a cost of about \$16,000 before it will be ready for deployment. Additional funds are available because wild land technicians have not been fully hired.

**Finance and Administrative – Section Lead Lisa Emry:**

- Notable revenues in the past month - \$368,824 in tax receipts.
- Notable expenses – tender repair \$19,600; bay door replacement \$59,760; hose replacement \$15,461.
- Hours worked – 7,003 (80 hours OT, no deployments).

**Logistics & Planning – Section Lead Rachel Dunn:**

- Cost savings on payroll year to date are \$343,461, including cost of interim fire chiefs and savings due to several positions not being hired or filled.
- Tender repair, 742 repairs, crew deployed to Georgia fire but returned en route and truck broke down in Illinois. District will be reimbursed for travel expenses and towing charge.
- Station 1 – installing two refillable water stations.
- Bay doors were delivered and will be installed; this will alleviate the heavy door problem.
- Type 6 buildout cost was \$160,030, including \$16,260 for Gavin's labor (8 months and 271 hours).
- New build for 745 – using parts from 742 and 743 – will result in five brush trucks for the district. This will take 6 – 7 months. Total costs are not available and include items such as a skid unit and box and Gavin's labor of about 270 hours. Or the job could be outsourced and would be ready in September. Discussion on options available and costs involved in utilizing parts from existing vehicles to build out new vehicles. Up front vehicles are 741 and 742; 743 could be utilized if necessary, but is not ideal. **A motion was made to authorize up to \$16,000 to finish buildout on 744, using funds from unused wildland technician salaries; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a regular board meeting on May 21, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Dowden.

Directors present: N. Dowden/K. Tarvainen/J. Hinton/J. Abendschan/C. Behnken

Directors absent: None

Also present: J. Tarvainen/Chief Rocco/Chief Bartlett/R. Dunn/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel/community members

**Roll Call:** All directors were present.

**Minutes A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes for the April 16, 2025 regular board meeting; motion seconded; the motion carried unanimously.**

**Election Report** The Designated Election Official, Rachel Dunn, reported the election results, noting there were three vacancies to be filled: Kiersten Tarvainen - 74 votes; John Tarvainen - 71 votes; Nate Dowden - 55 votes; Tad McClurg - 50 votes; Thomas Garmong - 47 votes; Michael Callies - 23 votes. All election reports have been completed and submitted to State officials, and the survey of returns has been completed. Mr. Dowden thanked Director Chad Behnken, who did not run for reelection, for his years of service to the board of directors and wished him well in future endeavors.

The newly elected directors - Kiersten Tarvainen, John Tarvainen, and Nathan Dowden - were sworn in as members of the board of directors by Board Secretary Donna Arkowski. Each new director read the oath of office, verbally inserting their name in the reading of the oath, and signing and dating the oath form. The oath forms were certified with the notary seal of Donna Arkowski.

The next order of business was the election of board officers. Nate Dowden nominated Kiersten Tarvainen to be the chair of the board. Ms. Tarvainen accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations for chair, and by voice vote, Ms. Tarvainen was elected chair.

Ms. Tarvainen nominated Jim Abendschan to be vice-chair. Mr. Abendschan accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations for vice-chair, and by voice vote, Mr. Abendschan was elected vice-chair.

Treasurer Jack Hinton addressed the room, announcing his resignation from his board position, effective immediately. He noted his nine years of service on the board, thanking the community for the opportunity to provide this service. He wished the fire district well as they move forward with a new board of directors and the hiring of a new fire chief. Before leaving, he reported that the district has \$3.207 million in cash assets and has expended 34.7% of budgeted expenses to date, which is under budget. He was praised and thanked for his many years of service. The bank will be notified of this change.

Returning to the election of board officers, there were no nominations for treasurer. This nomination will be tabled and addressed again at a future meeting. The directors were advised that the vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. Hinton must be filled by the board. The board may consider possible nominees from the candidates who were not elected in the May 6, 2025 election, or from other individuals living in Black Forest. The state statute is silent on the specific process to be utilized.

**Operations Reports** A written report was prepared and given to all directors. A copy is attached to the minutes.

**Finance and Administrative – Section Lead Lisa Emry given by Rachel Dunn:**

- Notable revenues in the past month - \$866,284 in tax receipts.
- Notable expenses - engine repair \$10,457; SCBA \$26,744; high flow jet fans \$8,844.
- Hours worked - 7,152 (45 hours OT, deployments 54 hours).

**Logistics & Planning – Section Lead Rachel Dunn:**

- Cost savings on payroll year to date are \$424,060, including cost of interim fire chiefs and savings due to several positions not being hired or filled.
- Brush 744 - in service; Brush 742 in service - repaired high pressure oil system; Becker sold for \$1,500; Brush 745 en route to Heiman in early June for build out work.
- Station 1 -two refillable water stations installation complete.
- Bay doors were delivered and installation is underway.
- Tender was deployed to Jenkins Creek fire in Minnesota.
- Type 6 will be assisting with Pike National Forest pile burns on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a regular board meeting on June 18, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair K. Tarvainen.

Directors present: K. Tarvainen/J. Abendschan/N. Dowden/J. Tarvainen

Directors absent: None

Also present: Chief Rocco/Chief Bartlett/R. Dunn/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel/community members

**Roll Call:** All directors were present.

**Minutes A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes for the May 21, 2025 regular board meeting; motion seconded; the motion carried unanimously.**

Update on Board Vacancy Due to the resignation of Treasurer Jack Hinton from the board of directors, a vacancy was created. Per Colorado Revised Statute 32-1-905, a board vacancy shall be filled within 60 days by appointment of a person by the remaining directors, to serve until the next regular election, when the position shall be filled by election for any remaining unexpired portion of the term. The public was advised of the board vacancy, and interested parties were asked to submit letters of interest to fill the vacancy. The applicants were Robert Kent, Rick Christian, Thomas Joyce, and Kyle Knox.

Mr. Knox attended the meeting via Zoom, is a new homeowner in the Black Forest area, and gave a brief synopsis of his experience in public safety, emergency services, and firefighter/EMT background. He noted he was impressed with the commitment to training by the Black Forest FD.

Mr. Joyce was present at the meeting and commented on his 40-year history in the fire service that included chief officer experience, training chief at Fort Carson, budget and operational oversight, community engagement and firewise expertise.

**A motion was made to nominate Thomas Joyce to fill the vacancy on the board of directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District; motion seconded; when questioned whether he would be willing to serve as treasurer of the board, Mr. Joyce said he would; a vote was taken and Mr. Joyce was approved to fill the board vacancy with a vote of four ayes.**

Mr. Thomas Joyce was sworn in as a member of the board of directors by Board Secretary Donna Arkowski by reading the oath of office and verbally inserting his name in the reading of the oath, and signing and dating the oath form. The form was certified with the notary seal of Donna Arkowski.

**A motion was made to appoint Thomas Joyce as the treasurer of the board of directors; motion seconded; motion carried with four ayes.**

**Operations Reports** A written report was prepared and given to all directors. A copy is attached to the minutes.

Finance and Administrative – Section Lead Lisa Emry given by Rachel Dunn:

- Notable revenues in the past month - \$195,771 in tax receipts; \$12,600 ambulance revenue.
- Notable expenses – engine repair on 742 tender \$3,893; turnout gear \$11,700; 2<sup>nd</sup> installment for water filling station work \$2,500.
- Hours worked – 6,403 (331 hours OT, deployments and backfill 184 hours).

Logistics & Planning – Section Lead Rachel Dunn:

- Brush 745 – en route to Heiman in June for build out; sold wildland tank and pump for \$750; sold deputy chief's rig for \$500.
- Station 1 – Bay doors were delivered and installation is complete.
- Single resource deployment to California with SOCO.
- Assist Pike National Forest with prescribed burn.

Chief Rocco Operations Report

- 3 fire calls, 57 EMS calls, 29 other, 699.24 training hours.
- Live fire training with Falcon and Monument FDs.
- Hands-on sawyer skills.
- Aided Monument, Falcon, Cimarron, and Peyton FDs with barn fire.
- Deployments to Twin Harbors, MN and Oak Creek, CA, assisting other FDs.

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### MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a special board meeting on July 9, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair K. Tarvainen.

Directors present: K. Tarvainen/J. Abendschan/T. Joyce/N. Dowden/J. Tarvainen

Directors absent: None

Also present: R. Dunn/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel/Dakota Spence-Zurek, Legal representative of CEGR Law

**Roll Call:** All directors were present.

**Agenda Approval:** **A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.**

**Fire Chief Hiring Update:** The interviewing of applicants for the fire chief position has been completed and four remaining candidates will be moving on to the next phase of this process. A meet and greet will be held for board members to meet the candidates.

**A motion was made to adjourn into executive session, pursuant to §24-6-402(4)(e), C.R.S., to determine positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations; developing strategy for and receiving reports on the progress of such negotiations; and instructing negotiators, all with respect to the Fire Chief hiring process; motion was seconded; motion was carried unanimously.**

**A motion was made to follow with a second executive session, pursuant to §24-6-402(4)(b), C.R.S., to receive legal advice specific to legal questions related to the Fire Chief hiring process; motion was seconded; motion was carried unanimously.**

The board adjourned into executive session in the conference room at 7:11 p.m. on July 9, 2025. Attorney Dakota Spence-Zurek of CEGR Law was in attendance via Zoom, and was informed that all five Directors were present, as well as Chief Dan Petersen, and Donna Arkowski, the recording secretary. The recording device was on. Attorney Spence-Zurek will monitor discussion and ensure all comments are on track and within the laws governing executive sessions. Discussion ensued at 7:15 p.m. per §24-6-402(4)(e), C.R.S., concerning positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategy for and receiving reports on the progress of such negotiations, and instructing negotiators.

The first executive session culminated at 9:33 p.m. on July 9, 2025, and segued into the second executive session, per §24-6-402(4)(b), C.R.S., to receive legal advice from Attorney Spence-Zurek pertaining to the hiring of a fire chief. Mr. Spence-Zurek requested that Chief Petersen leave the meeting at this point. The board continued their discussions with the attorney.

The second executive session concluded at 10:02 p.m. on July 9, 2025. Attorney Spence-Zurek announced that the five Directors and Ms. Arkowski were present throughout the executive session, along with himself, and that discussion stayed on topic. The board reconvened in public session at 10:06 p.m.

In public session, potential actions regarding the hiring process were considered leading to formal action. **A motion was made to authorize Chair Kiersten Tarvainen to appoint a negotiating committee, consisting of two board members and a consultant, to enter negotiations with the remaining candidates for the position of fire chief of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, such committee to perform background investigations, to coordinate with legal counsel, and to produce a near-final draft of the employment agreement for board consideration; the motion was seconded; the motion was carried unanimously in a vote.**

**Adjournment** There being no further business, the board adjourned at 10:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Arkowski  
Recording Secretary

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a regular board meeting on July 16, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair K. Tarvainen.

Directors present: K. Tarvainen/J. Abendschan/T. Joyce/N. Dowden/J. Tarvainen

Directors absent: None

Also present: Chief Rocco/L. Emry/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel/community members

**Roll Call:** All directors were present and a quorum was declared.

**Agenda Approval:** A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

**Minutes** A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes for the June 18, 2025 regular board meeting and the July 9, 2025 special board meeting; motion seconded; the motion carried unanimously.

**Hearing - Aspen Meadows Exclusion:** A hearing was convened concerning the exclusion of Filing 4 of Aspen Meadows from the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, located at the southeast corner of Forest Meadows Avenue and Cowpoker Road, approximately 22.6 acres. All legal steps have been taken to complete this action and Colorado Springs FD will provide fire protection for this area. No comments were forthcoming from the meeting attendees, and the hearing was closed. A motion was made to approve the Aspen Meadows exclusion as presented; motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

**Authorized Signers for Fire District Bank Account:** In accordance with banking requirements, the following Fire District personnel were approved as signers on Fire District bank accounts: Kiersten Tarvainen, Jim Abendschan, Thomas Joyce, Nathan Dowden, John Tarvainen, and David Rocco.

**Operations Reports** A written report was prepared and given to all directors. A copy is attached to the minutes.

#### Finance and Administrative – Section Lead Lisa Emry:

- Notable revenues in the past month - \$1,455,869 in tax receipts; ambulance revenue-N/A.
- Notable expenses - job shirts-\$2,966; painting station 1 hall-\$2,230; mop sink repair-\$1,218.
- Hours worked - 6,630 (792 hours OT, deployments and backfill 168 hours).

#### Logistics & Planning – Section Lead Rachel Dunn, reported by Lisa Emry:

- Brush 745 – en route to Heiman in July for build out; Brush 744 replacement pump; Reserve engine repairs.
- Station 1 – Bay doors installation is complete.
- Septic system replacement for Station 2 scheduled, pending permit.
- Single resource deployment to California with SOCO.

#### Chief Rocco Operations Report

- 70 total calls - 1 fire call, 36 EMS calls, 33 other, 656 training hours.
- Monthly training with Monument FD-vertical ventilation and flow and move techniques.
- Extrication training in Ridgway.
- Members attended firefighter symposium in Wichita, KS.
- Drafting training with Falcon, Peyton, and Monument FDs.
- E-DARP ongoing.
- Aerial truck is on the market.

#### **Old Business**

Subsequent to special meeting of July 7, a negotiations committee was approved, consisting of Directors Kiersten Tarvainen and Nate Dowden and Chief Dan Petersen. Background checks are in progress and when completed, the next phase of the chief hiring process will begin, to include negotiations with the candidates. Attention to due diligence is being followed carefully.

#### **New Business**

Concerning the firefighter association, legal advice was received by Chair Tarvainen and forwarded to all directors. Per suggestions from legal, a statement was prepared for Chair Tarvainen to present as follows: "The Firefighter Safety Act provides a process for firefighters or local representatives to meet and confer with the District Board on matters of concern regarding workplace conditions. The Board is willing to

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a regular board meeting on August 20, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair K. Tarvainen.

Directors present: K. Tarvainen/J. Abendschan/T. Joyce/N. Dowden/J. Tarvainen via Zoom

Directors absent: None

Also present: Attorney Dakota Spence-Zurek/Chief Rocco/L. Emry/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel/community members

**Roll Call:** All directors were present and a quorum was declared.

**Agenda Approval:** A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

**Minutes** A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes for the July 16, 2025 regular board meeting; motion seconded; the motion carried unanimously.

**Update on Fire Chief Hiring** The negotiations committee has met with all the candidates, and all the background checks are complete. Candidate David Rocco has been named as the finalist for the fire chief position. Contract negotiations are continuing, and a tentative offer will be presented by the full board at a special meeting on September 3, 2025.

While Josh Bartlett was functioning as the interim fire chief for the BFFD until he was forced to resign due to his injuries, David Rocco was the interim operational chief for the BFFD. On advice from counsel, a motion to name Chief Rocco the interim chief was withdrawn. He will continue as the interim operational chief until finalization of negotiations. There was board consensus that an executive session would not be needed in this meeting.

**Operations Reports** A written report was prepared and given to all directors. A copy is attached to the minutes.

**Finance and Administrative – Section Lead Lisa Emry:**

- Finance reports are not available – accounting will be updated by the September meeting report.
- Notable revenues in the past month not available.
- Notable expenses – Medic 762 \$2,966; hydrant valves \$2,052; 1<sup>st</sup> payment on flatbed \$24,750.
- Hours worked – 6,285 (798 hours OT, deployments and backfill 544 hours).

**Fleet Management**

- 741 deployment – Delores, Durango
- 744 now in service
- 745 will be picked up from Heiman first week of September, when the 2<sup>nd</sup> payment of \$24,750 will be made, and then scheduled for lighting and radios at Digicom
- 712 OOS; going to Front Range for pump work September 3
- Aerial did not sell; high bid of \$8,000. Vehicle has many mechanical issues. Any repurposing would be costly. No action taken.

**Facilities – Section Lead Rachel Dunn, reported by Lisa Emry:**

- Station 1 – painted community room
- Station 2 – permit approved for septic system. Work to be completed by 9/2/25.

**Deployment**

- Rachel Dunn to Alaska and Wyoming
- Crews to California with tender

**Chief Rocco Operations Report**

- 117 total calls - 2 fire calls, 80 EMS calls, 35 other, 603 training hours.
- Monthly training with neighboring departments.
- DOP certs progressing; two BFFD members are now proctors; BFFD hosted Fire Instructor II course with 2 BFFD members; a BFFD VEMS member achieved Drillmaster certification and she and another BFFD Honor Guard member took part in ceremony at Tomb of the Unknown Solder in Arlington National Cemetery.
- Purchased 2 lawnmowers for stations 1 and 2, and recliners, lockers and paint are needed for station 1.

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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### **MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a special board meeting on September 3, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair K. Tarvainen.

Directors present: K. Tarvainen/J. Abendschan/T. Joyce/N. Dowden/J. Tarvainen

Directors absent: None

Also present: D. Rocco/R. Dunn/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel/Dakota Spence-Zurek, Legal representative of CEGR Law

**Roll Call:** All directors were present.

**Agenda Approval:** **A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.**

**Personnel Matter:** Chief Bartlett was the interim chief of the BFFD until he was injured while working for the Colorado Springs FD. He then was required to resign from his duties with the BFFD. Chief Rocco was the interim operations chief for BFFD, and is now in the process of resigning from the Colorado Springs FD as he has been selected for the position of chief of the BFFD. This process will not be completed until October. In order to maintain an appropriate chain of command structure, the board considered naming Chief Rocco as the interim chief of the BFFD while his separation from the Colorado Springs FD is culminated, and negotiations for his position as chief of the BFFD are finalized. This strategy was approved by Attorney Spence-Zurek. **A motion was made and seconded to appoint David Rocco as the interim chief of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District until such time as a permanent chief has been hired; the motion was carried unanimously.**

Director Dowden distributed materials concerning the parking area repairs to be considered at the next board meeting.

**Adjournment** There being no further business, the board adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Arkowski  
Recording Secretary

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a regular board meeting on September 17, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:13 p.m. by Chair K. Tarvainen.

Directors present: K. Tarvainen/J. Abendschan/T. Joyce/N. Dowden/J. Tarvainen

Directors absent: None

Also present: Chief Rocco/R. Dunn/L. Emry/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel/community members

**Roll Call:** All directors were present and a quorum was declared.

**Agenda Approval:** A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

**Minutes** A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes for the August 20, 2025 regular board meeting and the September 3, 2025 special board meeting; the motion carried unanimously.

**Operations Reports** A written report was prepared and given to all directors. A copy is attached to the minutes.

#### Finance and Administrative – Section Lead Lisa Emry:

- Notable revenues – property tax \$64,255.
- Notable expenses – annual radio maintenance contract \$7,020; physical fitness equipment station 2 \$3,613; 2<sup>nd</sup> payment – Heiman flatbed \$24,750.
- Hours worked – 6,813 (888 hours OT, deployments and backfill 536 hours).

#### Logistics and Planning – Section Lead Rachel Dunn:

##### Fleet Management (Gavin Smith)

- 745 back from Heiman; going to Digicom 9/29.
- 712 at Front Range for mechanical seal and transfer case leak.
- Aerial did not sell; high bid of \$8,000. Gavin in talks with JJ Kane.
- Reserve back from McCandless – sensor fixed.
- Pump testing complete on all apparatus except 712.
- 741 back in service; fuel leak during Durango deployment.

##### Facilities

- Station 2 – septic tank replacement project complete.

##### Deployment

- 741 – Delores, CO
- 744 – in CA on severity patrol
- Single resource to WY
- Type 3 – Gavin to pull apart and diagnose/repair body structure

#### Chief Rocco Operations Report

- 104 total calls - 2 fire calls, 62 EMS calls, 40 other, 626 training hours.
- Crew assists in previous month: structure fire on Allen Road; smoke investigation – tree on power line; participated in BF Festival parade.
- Deployed to San Bernardino NF fire.
- A BFFRPD crew member attended Midwest Children's Burn camp.

#### Old Business

Update on Fire Chief Hiring Chief Dan Peterson reviewed the details of the hiring process, including job posting, processing of applicants, interview process, and final selection of candidate. A board-appointed selection committee chose David Rocco as the finalist for review by the entire board of directors. A

**motion was made and seconded to approve the appointment of David Rocco as the new fire chief. Upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.** The employment agreement was reviewed by Mr. Rocco, and he agreed with its contents. A motion was made and seconded to approve the employment agreement; the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Rocco's start date will be October 15, 2025, and he will be the interim chief until that date.

Impact Fees Interim Chief Rocco noted that neighboring districts are collecting impact fees, but BFFRPD is

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a regular board meeting on October 15, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair K. Tarvainen.

Directors present: K. Tarvainen/T. Joyce/N. Dowden/J. Tarvainen

Directors absent: J. Abendschan

Also present: Chief Rocco/R. Dunn/L. Emry/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel/community members

**Roll Call:** Director J. Abendschan was absent; **a motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve Mr. Abendschan's absence.** A quorum was declared.

**Agenda Approval:** **A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.**

**Minutes** **A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes for the September 17, 2025 regular board meeting; the motion carried unanimously.**

**Operations Reports** A written report was prepared and given to all directors. A copy is attached to the minutes.

#### Finance and Administrative – Section Lead Lisa Emry:

- Notable revenues – property tax \$46,821.
- Ambulance revenue - \$412. Ambulance collections are in transition from Quad Billing to new contractor and the collections process has not been stabilized as yet. Also, the Federal shutdown has impacted Medicare's ability to process payments.
- Notable expenses – laptops for chief and admin. officer, \$3,485.
- Plymovent general R&M for station 1 - \$8,180.
- Septic tank installation cost - \$4,275.
- Hours worked – 6,932 (848 hours OT, deployments and backfill 630 hours).

#### Logistics and Planning – Section Lead Rachel Dunn:

##### Fleet Management (Gavin Smith)

- 745 back from Digicom; Gavin finishing equipment install; in service in November.
- 712 still at Front Range for mechanical seal and transfer case leak.
- Aerial did not sell; Chief Rocco considering keeping it for alternative use.
- 8591 (Reserve) at station 2.

##### Facilities

- Station 1 and 2 – annual service for Plymovents and generators.

##### Deployment

- 744 – returned from CA.
- Type 3 – Gavin to pull apart and diagnose/repair body structure.

#### Chief Rocco Operations Report

- 91 total calls - 3 fire calls, 52 EMS calls, 36 other, 676 training hours.

Chief assessed the status of the district as sound, with two stations and very few calls, but it is a district that is going to grow substantially, most notably with Flying Horse North and Sterling Ranch. BFFD is surrounded by other districts that will assist, but over reliance on neighboring districts may be seen as an imposition. It may be well-considered for BFFD to keep the new engine on order to meet future demands.

#### Old Business

Alternative funding methods such as impact fees and sales tax are important as the district considers methods for increasing funding. Large expenditures such as a station, apparatus, and personnel need to be considered. Director Dowden noted there may be items earmarked for the district in Sanctuary in the Pines or Sterling Ranch, for example, that were included in original PUDs and that have been lost track of. It was noted that the City is not interested in expanding into Black Forest, but rather is moving to the east.

#### New Business

2026 Budget – first draft highlights:

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a regular board meeting on November 19, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair K. Tarvainen.

Directors present: K. Tarvainen/T. Joyce/N. Dowden/J. Tarvainen

Directors absent: J. Abendschan

Also present: Chief Rocco/R. Dunn/L. Emry/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel

**Roll Call:** Director J. Abendschan was absent; **a motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve Mr. Abendschan's absence.** A quorum was declared.

**Agenda Approval:** **A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.**

**Minutes** **A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes for the October 15, 2025 regular board meeting; the motion carried unanimously.**

**Operations Reports** A written report was prepared and given to all directors. A copy is attached to the minutes.

Finance and Administrative – Section Lead Lisa Emry:

- Notable revenues – property tax \$70,945.
- Ambulance revenue - \$7,242 – last collections from Quad Billing; future ambulance billings will be handled by EMS-MC.
- Notable expenses – volunteer pension annual contribution-\$10,000; pump transfer case on engine - \$21,380; radio and emergency wiring on brush truck - \$4,054.
- Hours worked – 7,329 (742 hours OT, deployments and backfill 0 hours).

Finance positions: Chief Rocco noted that District funds are currently not earning much, if any, interest. A bank officer has suggested that funds could be deposited in a high-yielding account that will allow money to be moved as needed without any penalty. At the October meeting, approval was given to move two smaller accounts into high-yielding money market accounts, but it would be beneficial to move the bulk of district funds into higher interest accounts and transfer funds into checking as needed to cover financial obligations. The bank will allow six withdrawals each month without penalty. The operations account currently has \$1,972,663, a number which fluctuates with banking activity. A new line item will be added to the balance sheet to reflect all asset account balances. **A motion was made to open a money market account at First National Bank and deposit into it the funds held in BFFD Operations Checking account 4599, and the authorized signers on such account will be the same as currently on file with First National Bank; motion seconded; motion carried.** A copy of these minutes will be provided to the bank.

Logistics and Planning – Section Lead Rachel Dunn:

Fleet Management (Gavin Smith)

- 712 back in service.
- 745 delayed with other repairs; in service in December.
- 781 backing damage repaired.

Facilities

- Station 1 – repaired eye wash station.
- Concrete work scheduled for spring 2026.
- SCBA compressor at Station 1 repaired.
- Sprinklers blown out for winter.

Deployment

- Nothing to report.

Planning

- Radio programming completed.
- Pikes Peak Library District will place a book pickup box at Station 1.
- Marina is working on a grant for a chipper and new ambulance cots.

Chief Rocco Operations Report

- 85 total calls - 1 fire call, 58 EMS calls, 26 other, 761 training hours.

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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### **MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BLACK FOREST FIRE/RESCUE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

The Board of Directors of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District held a special board meeting on December 5, 2025, such meeting duly posted for public notice. The meeting was a virtual meeting, held at Station 1 and via Zoom.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair K. Tarvainen.

Directors present: K. Tarvainen/J. Abendschan/T. Joyce/N. Dowden/J. Tarvainen

Directors absent: None

Also present: D. Rocco/J. Bartlett/R. Dunn/L. Emry/D. Arkowski/fire department personnel

**Roll Call:** All directors were present.

**Agenda Approval:** **A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.**

The agenda item for the meeting was consideration of a healthcare insurance stipend for employees.

Chief Rocco advised that in 2022 the board approved a stipend for employees who opted not to carry the health insurance offered by the district. The cost to provide health insurance was about \$8,000 per year. The stipend was \$3,600 per year and five employees took advantage of this offer in 2025. BFFRPD is the only fire district offering this benefit.

Firefighter Brandon Jones addressed the board, advising that he has health insurance through his wife's policy, and he used the Black Forest stipend to help pay for this coverage. He urged the board to continue the stipend policy as it saves the district the cost of carrying insurance coverage for him and other employees who may take advantage of the stipend.

Board discussion considered whether the stipend policy was a recruitment and retention tool, noting that the existence of this policy is not advertised. They also addressed whether employees may have health coverage elsewhere, the equity of a stipend policy, and whether employees who do not use their insurance coverage may expect refunds. Chief Rocco advised the primary issues for hiring and maintaining employees at BFFRPD are low salaries and low call volume. He advised that the improved health insurance being implemented in 2026 is a cafeteria plan with better coverage, and plans offered at low, medium, and high levels.

The directors were asked to declare their willingness to continue the stipend policy, with unanimous agreement that it should be discontinued. **A motion was made to approve implementation in 2026 of the newly configured cafeteria plan for the employee health insurance benefit, and to rescind the current annual \$3,600 stipend awarded to employees who elect not to participate in the BFFRPD District's health insurance plan; motion seconded; motion carried with all directors voting aye.**

**Adjournment** There being no further business, the board adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Arkowski  
Recording Secretary

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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BFFD assisted MFD rescuing a dog from a pipe; participated in Trunk or Treat community event; Falcon FPD has asked Classic homes for land parcel for a station; about 8,000 homes to be built in Timber Ridge and Sterling Ranch area and development will include two schools, commercial buildings, a variety of home types; Briargate Parkway will be completed from Vollmer to Meridian and possibly to Black Forest Road.

Flying Horse North – Concerning water availability and meeting property insurance requirements, cisterns are not considered acceptable. Black Forest is emblematic of a national problem concerning wildfire protection. The board will be kept updated on wildfire resiliency code developments.

### **Old Business**

Impact fees – Movement on this issue is continuing; another consulting firm has been approached.

Changing board meeting day – In an attempt to accommodate schedules of board members and to alleviate working hours of staff, it was agreed that changing meeting times would be advantageous. **A motion was made to change the monthly board meeting to the second Wednesday of every month, beginning at 5:30 p.m., such change to become effective in January 2026. Motion seconded; motion carried.**

Monument FD MOU – Chief Rocco is working toward a cooperative agreement with Monument FPD to facilitate a relationship that will handle matters related to inspections, plan reviews, and e-darp matters. MFPD will manage the MOU and include BFFD personnel.

Final draft – 2026 budget. Ms. Emry presented the final work product for the 2026 budget. Detail was provided as needed. Potential additional funding items may be impact fees, sales tax, and increased revenue from ambulance fees due to new provider. Total projected revenues are \$5,911,115. The mill levy certification will be submitted to the El Paso County Commissioners before December 15, 2025. Chief Rocco proposes BFFD compensation matching that of MFPD, and improving and elevating the status of BFFD employees with higher wages and larger increases upon promotions. BFFD is once again contracting with volunteer firefighters. BFFD is proposing a 90/10 split with employees for health insurance costs as a measure for improving the health plan. BFFD will not see a reduction in property taxes in 2026 due to the sizable increase in construction of high-value homes in the district.

### **New Business**

Josh Bartlett has been rehired by BFFD to assist with Human Resources operations. He will be a contract employee until the end of 2025, and a part-time employee beginning in 2026.

Board Member Reports Director Joyce provided information to the board concerning the Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code as created by the Colorado Planning Assistance for Wildfire.

Correspondence: None reported.

Public Comment: None.

Future Meetings: The next regular board meeting will be held on December 10, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment: There being no further business, **upon a motion, second, and unanimous vote, the board adjourned at 8:56 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Arkowski  
Recording Secretary

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

- The expected general property tax to be collected in 2026 is \$4,854,951, an increase over 2025 collections. Ambulance collections are anticipated to rise with the new collection agency handling ambulance billing. During 2025 the district received \$373,301 in reimbursements from SB 238-001, but this funding stream will dry up in 2026.
- Finance and administrative expenditures were reviewed, noting big changes in some line items and the addition of a paid driver position and large increases in health insurance. Overall increases in wages and benefits were pointed out, as well as more detail in fleet and facilities expenses.
- Lexipro has been on hold for some time and the contract with them will be examined.
- It is anticipated that legal expenses in 2026 will be considerably less than they have been the past few years.
- No wages were included in the deployment section. A public hearing on the budget will be held at the November board meeting.

Discussion on handling funds that are being held in reserve and the most effective way to earn interest on these funds. It was noted that \$340,000 is being held in two separate checking accounts that are paying a very low interest rate. Bank officials have advised BFFD personnel that these funds could be held in a high-yield checking account, paying 3.5% interest, with no penalties for moving the money in and out of the high yield account as needed. **A motion was made to authorize Chief Rocco and staff to move \$340,000 that is currently being held in low-yield accounts into a high-yield checking account; motion seconded. A vote was called and the motion carried.**

Development Impact Fees Proposal received from BBC Research and Consulting for the study of developing impact fees for the BFFD district, with costs not to exceed \$15,000. The objective is to develop impact fees that will recover the capital cost that new residential and non-residential development will place on BFFD's firefighting capital while conforming with the impact fee requirements in state statutes and federal case law. **A motion was made to accept the proposal from BBC Research and Consulting, with noted red-line edits, and authorize Chief Rocco to execute the contract; motion seconded; a vote was called and the motion carried.**

Board Member Reports Director Joyce reported an ISO-related meeting will be held November 13, and chiefs and fire marshals are encouraged to attend. Water availability challenges for fire districts will directly impact ISO ratings and insurance costs for property owners. The IFC needs to be adopted by April 2026 and enacted by June 30, 2026.

Correspondence: None reported.

Public Comment: None.

Future Meetings: The next regular board meeting will be held on November 19, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. There will be consideration to change the day and time of board meetings.

Adjournment: There being no further business, **upon a motion, second, and unanimous vote, the board adjourned at 8:13 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Arkowski  
Recording Secretary

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

not. Chief Rocco suggested that BFFRPD study the practices of Monument FD in this area and follow their lead. The collection of impact fees by fire districts is under study, and not all areas are currently legislated. Treasurer Joyce provided details of ongoing development and implementation of impact fees throughout Colorado. In discussion, it was agreed that the implementation of an impact fee for the BFFRPD is in the best interest of the District. **A motion was made for consideration of an impact fee, pursuant to SB 24-194, and the Board directs Chief Rocco to implement information gathering to allow the Board to take such action as needed; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

Special District Emergency Services Funding permits the District to implement a sales tax in the District that must be approved by District voters in an election.

Engine Chief Rocco advised the Board that a new engine is not needed. The Front Range engine ordered in 2023 was considered desirable due to the engine being the last of its kind with a specific pollution system, and the Board was assured the truck could be sold readily if not needed. To cancel the contract would incur an \$80,000 penalty. It may be possible to sell the engine, or possibly have another entity take over the contract. Re the building of a third station, a parcel of land in the Pineries area has been designated for the BFFRPD and the SO.

Concrete repair update: The project was re-quoted, with two companies submitting proposals. JTX quoted \$73,510 for 1,300 square feet; Springs Concrete quoted \$126,000 for 3,600 square feet.

CEGR submitted documents to the Board to be used in preparing services agreements and RFPs. The Board discussed specific sections of the documents as it addressed approving a contract for the concrete repair work.

**A motion was made to contract with JTX Services based on their estimate 1227 of \$73,510 with the following stipulations: Express acknowledgement and acceptance of specifications previously provided authorizing Chief Rocco to finalize negotiations with JTX Services, conditioned on reconciliation of the contract with the District's legal counsel, retaining Paragraph 13, the warranty clause in the Services Agreement document, clarifying the need to obtain lien releases to the principal representatives, and that Chief Rocco has the authority to designate the principal representative for the District; motion was seconded; motion carried unanimously.** Chair Tarvainen will clear the agreement with legal.

IFC Update Negotiations are in progress. WUI training upcoming.

Public Comment: CSFD opened a new station on Highway 83 which may provide response aid to BFFRPD.

**Future Meetings** The next regular board meeting will be held on October 15, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. and there will be a swearing-in ceremony for Chief Rocco prior to the meeting.

**Adjournment** There being no further business, **upon a motion, second, and unanimous vote, the board adjourned at 8:57 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Arkowski  
Recording Secretary

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

- Crew assists in previous month: vehicle rollover; cut lines and tree mitigation; structure fire at Flying Horse North club house, noting no fire protection or alarm is present in that structure; possible arson fire in Flying Horse North residence; vehicle extrication in Sterling Ranch; removal of unstable statute on Station 1 grounds.
- Fielding Lucas conducted school inspections.

### **Old Business**

No feedback received to date on the Aspen Meadows exclusion.

Flying Horse North update: Developer is proposing a tender for fire suppression, which would not be adequate and not acceptable per NFPA 1142. Cherokee Fire District is a water source for FHN.

Fire Marshal Update: The Colorado Wildfire Resiliency code (WRC) state law goes into effect in April 2026, at which time it is planned that all fire protection districts will be in alignment for fire codes with adoption of 2021 IFC. Preparatory work is required.

Gutters update: Rainfall and erosion processes have damaged gutters to the point of needing replacement. Quotes received were reviewed with recommendations. **A motion was made and seconded to accept the proposal for gutter replacement from Pristine Gutters, assuming they are seamless gutters; but if they are not seamless gutters, contract with Intrawest; motion carried unanimously.**

Concrete repair update: Three previous proposals were lacking enough specificity to make a decision. Director Dowden lead a discussion of options for concrete and asphalt pavement repairs, to be considered at a future meeting, as well as specific items to be included in a bid for the work.

Quad Billing transition: In transition with a possible completion date in September.

Accounting contracting transition: In transition, with confusion on when the previous contractor would end and the new contractor would begin. Completion may occur in a few weeks.

Public Comment: Large water storage tank on Swan Road belongs to Cherokee Water District.

**Future Meetings** A special board meeting will be held September 3, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. for action on hiring a fire chief. A meeting of the Volunteer Pension Board of Directors will be held on September 17, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. It will be followed immediately by the next regular board meeting at approximately 7:15 p.m. on September 17, 2025.

**Adjournment** There being no further business, **upon a motion, second, and unanimous vote, the board adjourned at 9:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Arkowski  
Recording Secretary

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

entertain this process if there are issues of importance to assess regarding current health, safety and welfare concerns. However, the Board is not in a position to speak for the public that pays District taxes on matters of collective bargaining over discipline, promotions, wages and benefits.

We hope the Local will take a step back from requesting recognition as a collective bargaining group, especially during this critical transition period, and allow the next Chief to be hired and to begin looking at the structure of Black Forest from all angles, with an overall leadership vision, including taking a look at the pay, promotion and benefits opportunities for our firefighters. If Local 5543 is unwilling to wait for this needed transitional step, the voters will ultimately be asked to decide the question of accepting collective bargaining in this organization. At this time, we ask that all areas of concern regarding health, safety and welfare should be brought to my attention in writing so they may be looked into." End of statement by Chair Tarvainen.

Parking Area Repairs: Bids were received for consideration by the board for repair work to be completed in the station 1 parking area. The bids projected the work to be done inconsistently, and work items included in the bids did not equally address the job, the area to be repaired, or specificity of techniques to be used. The board agreed that an inspection of the area to be repaired was needed, and will do a walk-through of the parking area following adjournment of the meeting. No formal action will be taken on this matter and it was tabled.

Chief Josh Bartlett: Chair Tarvainen announced that Chief Bartlett was injured while working for Colorado Springs FD, and was required to resign from his work for Black Forest FD. Neighboring districts have been informed. As the search for a new fire chief for Black Forest is nearing completion, the board will not attempt to replace Chief Bartlett. Chief Rocco noted that neighboring departments will send battalion chiefs as needed, and that he will also be available. Chief Bartlett was praised for his valuable service to the Black Forest community.

Board member report: The IFCC is being studied for update, with a goal of completion in April 2026. Many organizations and individuals are involved in this work, including the HBA, Regional Planning, fire chiefs and fire marshals. Treasurer Tom Joyce is involved, and will update the BFFD board monthly. It is projected that the item will be presented to the BOCC in January 2026.

Public Comment: Lt. Brandon Jones wished to speak, and was informed that he should not appear in a BFFD uniform when speaking for the Union. Mr. Jones was allowed to address the board, urging open discussion and cooperation, noting that things are improving in the department. Chair Tarvainen asked Mr. Jones to submit in writing before the board meeting items he would like to address.

**Future Meetings** The next regular board meeting will be August 20, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

**Adjournment** There being no further business, **upon a motion, second, and vote, the board adjourned at 8:21 p.m.** Following adjournment, the board members gathered in the parking area to survey the work to be done.

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## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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- Falcon FD began training academy, utilizing BFFRPD's training grounds.

### Chief Bartlett Report

- Flying Horse North wants hydrants rather than cisterns, and may take the matter to the BOCC. Treasurer Joyce noted that he is working with the BOCC re fire codes in attempt to have all departments and the City utilizing the same codes. Briefings in this matter are forthcoming.

### **Old Business**

**EMS billing contract:** EMSMC, a third-party billing agency for EMS services, has been considered to provide billing services for the BFFRPD. **A motion was made and seconded to approve EMSMC as the ambulance billing contractor for the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District; discussion – there are a few minor complaints on this company with the Better Business Bureau; motion carried unanimously.**

Directors K. Tarvainen and Dowden and Chief D. Petersen have conducted personal interviews with fire chief applicants during the past month. A meet-and-greet will be held on June 27 to give all board members an opportunity to meet all applicants that choose to attend. This will be a small-scale unofficial gathering and no official business will be conducted.

### **New Business**

The septic tank at station 2 needs replacement, and a quote of \$8550 has been received from Rhino Rock Designs to do this work. The current tank is collapsing. **A motion was made to accept the \$8550 quote from Rhino Rock Designs to do the septic tank work; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

**Board member report:** Chair K. Tarvainen reported on a work session that was held to consider leadership qualities of chief applicants, and to formulate recommendations and questions for the chief interview process.

**Public Comment:** FF Chris Patterson addressed a crisis of retention in the fire department of chiefs and staff, the lack of command staff, and complained about lack of procedures and policies. Other concerns included lack of involvement of personnel with the operations of the district, lack of transparency in choosing a new chief, and no leadership.

Lt. Brandon Jones spoke, representing the union, and thanked individuals for their contributions and efforts and urged cooperation.

FF Lisa Neumann urged transparency from the board and future chief and a relationship between the board and staff.

Treasurer Joyce applauded statements from the firefighters and encouraged their continued interaction with board members, with submissions in writing. The current focus of the board is the hiring of a new chief and patience is important as Colorado state law governs the process.

Visitor Nathan Rosane was critical of processes being utilized by the board and did not understand the state statutes that govern special district operations.

The July 4 picnic has been cancelled as the BFFD will be participating in the Black Forest Festival on August 9.

**Future Meetings** The next regular board meeting will be July 16, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. A meet and greet for fire chief applicants and board members will be held on Friday, June 27.

**Adjournment** There being no further business, **upon a motion, second, and vote, the board adjourned at 8:07 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

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## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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### Chief Rocco Operations Report

- 2 fire calls, 50 EMS calls, 37 other, 901.16 training hours.
- BFFD crew members attended training with Underground Engine Co. focused on fireground priorities.
- Assisted Falcon FD with car accident.
- BFFD firefighter Trevor Holiday awarded designation of Fire Officer on April 7.
- Assisted in community outreach including Easter egg hunt, STEAM day at Wolford Elementary, and a cat rescue.
- BFFD crew taught S-130/190 wildland course to Huerfano FPD in Gardner, CO.

### Chief Bartlett Report

- A request has been made to Flying Horse North to install a cistern water system as required.
- Re the Black Forest Festival, on August 9<sup>th</sup>, the organizing committee has requested using the helipad at the station for a helicopter landing and demonstration. To allow this usage, some props that were built for fire training will need to be de-constructed. The training area there also has some hazardous and potentially harmful elements on the ground. Chief Bartlett asked if an alternative site could be used. The Festival committee also asked if the fire department parking lot could be used for a classic car show. Other possible sites will be reviewed. Ms. Dunn will determine how many cars would be included in the car show, and it will be determined if that event would hinder response by the fire department. Another site will be needed for the helicopter activity.

### **Old Business**

Update on Lexipol: All policies involved are being studied for a planned merger of the policies.

EMS billing contract: The proposed contract is being reviewed by the attorneys and when their review is completed, the information will be forwarded to the board members.

Accounting contract: After completion of the 2024 audit, the cross over from the old accounting firm to the new will be finalized. This is expected to happen in the next month.

### **New Business**

Status of the IAFF Local: This matter will be tabled pending further review by legal and the status of the board of directors' members.

Chief selection process: Directors Tarvainen and Dowden have been working with Chief Petersen on reviewing the 26 applications received to date. The closing for applications is May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Concerning key competencies to be considered, Ms. Dunn will provide the Korn Ferry improvement guide to all board members for guidance in the selection process. The initial screening process will begin at the end of May. The anticipated timeline is for the board to determine who will comprise the selection panel and to have a finalist by mid-July.

Board member report: Chair Tarvainen attended the Fire Academy graduation, at which BFFD was thanked for their support.

Correspondence: Thank-you letter from School in the Woods students thanking the crew for visiting. Also, a letter from the SO to Chief Bartlett thanking BFFD for fire response assistance.

Public Comment: Acting Lt. Holiday, IAFF union member, reported on department activity and level of personnel, citing gaps in staffing.

Ms. Smith asked if the board would be specifically searching for a treasurer to fill the vacancy on the board. This will be determined, and an interested party may or may not fill the treasurer role. In the interim, all questions related to finances will be handled by the chair.

**Future Meetings** The next regular board meeting will be June 18, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

**Adjournment** There being no further business, **upon a motion, second, and vote, the board adjourned at 7:48 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Recording Secretary

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- **A motion was made to approve option 2 as presented, up to \$70,000, to include a Heiman build with 14-week lead time, Digicomm lighting, and an approximate ETA in September; motion seconded; discussion – travel is separate; motion carried.**
- **A motion was made to authorize staff to sell an unneeded truck bed from inventory; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

### Chief Rocco Operations Report

- Community outreach addressed; cat in tree rescue.
- Grass fire in eastern portion of county.
- Assisted US Fire Service with burn piles in Woodland Park.
- Training schedule being maintained.
- Multiple car crashes due to snowy weather.

### Chief Bartlett Report

- EDARP inspections in the county are behind schedule due to communication problems, with the BFFD 48 inspections behind schedule.

### **Old Business**

Chair Dowden, Vice-Chair Tarvainen, and Chief Petersen met with two Monument FD board directors and their Chief Kovacs to discuss alternative service delivery models involving the Black Forest FPD. Monument FD has declined this possibility for 2025, as that district is in the midst of an accreditation process, building a new fire station, and readying a new fire training academy. Further discussions on this matter may be possible in 2026. The Monument FD also may be interested in the possibility of a consolidation rather than a limited contract in the future. Chief Kovacs continues to provide support for Black Forest FD in the area of training and fire support. **A motion was made to proceed with a solicitation and hiring of a fire chief for the Black Forest Fire Department; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

The form of the solicitation has been reviewed by Chief Petersen and edited and was discussed with the board. Chief Petersen believes the position specifications and requirements are sufficient. The wage parameters and benefits were discussed, with agreement on the details. A timeline for the posting was addressed, noting that Attorney Glesne needs to review all factors of the position before posting it. Chief Petersen suggested that after Ms. Glesne approves the posting, that it be open for four weeks. If potential candidates wish to travel to Colorado, the covering of travel expenses may be discussed. A meet and greet may be scheduled in which all candidates and directors may be present for questions and answers, and the interviews may begin the next day, orchestrated by an interview committee.

**A motion was made to modify the salary range for the chief position to be \$146,000 to \$190,000; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

**A motion was made to appoint Nate Dowden and Kiersten Tarvainen to work with Dan Petersen and Linda Glesne of CEGRLaw on developing a job posting, and that Nate Dowden and Kiersten Tarvainen be empowered to create an interview committee; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

**A motion was made to increase the retainer to be paid to Dan Petersen by an additional \$10,000; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

It was recommended that a background investigation be conducted of an applicant that includes visiting their home and past job environment.

Fielding Lucas addressed the board concerning potential contracts for ambulance services and Medicare Part B details and an organization that can assist with survey requirements to ensure compliance of the District with Medicare Part B. Data collection is required, and a submission deadline is May 30. BFFD is currently out of compliance and a fee of \$28,000 would help the district gain compliance. **A motion was made to waive procurement requirements as outlined in Policy 600.02 and engage with Public Consulting Group for completion of the Medicare Part B survey for the rate as presented in their proposal, contingent upon a satisfactory review by District Counsel; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

A new billing company for ambulance calls is needed to replace Quad Billing. **A motion was made to contract with EMS Management Consultants for collection of ambulance fees; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

FF Lucas reported on coming changes in WUI codes in El Paso County, which will include new

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

requirements for building materials, governance of landscaping materials, and other items to be considered. More information will be forthcoming. Board members expressed disapproval of some of the items discussed.

Ms. Emry explained that new regulations are in place to ensure that all documents and web material is compliant with requirements. Changes will be made and fines may be assessed for noncompliance.

Public Comment Lt. Jones spoke, representing Union Local 5543, created to strengthen the foundation of fire department. It will protect firefighters in their careers and assist collective bargaining, and is seeking recognition as a collective bargaining unit. Attorney Glesne has been asked to provide guidance in this matter.

**Future Meetings** The next regular board meeting will be May 21, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., the next regular meeting following the May 6, 2025 board election. The current board will convene the meeting, the winners of the board election will be introduced and sworn in, and the newly seated board will then elect its officers.

**Adjournment** There being no further business, **upon a motion, second, and vote, the board adjourned at 10:20 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Arkowski  
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## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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Lexipol Policy Binders: Pending.

### **New Business**

Contract for Services The attorney has advised that the district may move forward concerning a sole source contract for services without an RFP. A needs analysis was completed by Chief Dan Petersen and there has been significant input. Chair Dowden, noting that he prefers that the district remain an independent entity, made the following statement: Based on information received in the recent "District Needs Analysis" report prepared by Chief Dan Petersen, and feedback and input from Community members and members of the BFFD, I move the following:

**Motion:**

- 1. Suspend Board Policy 600.02 and allow direct solicitation of potential proposals for Contracted Services to the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, for Command/Management services, to include training personnel, a division of the fire marshal, and human resources support. Such services shall exclude Line/Career Firefighters and Wildland Technician personnel.**
- 2. Informed by the general consensus of information received, the solicitation of services shall be "sole source" discussions with Monument Fire District.**
- 3. Initial services considered shall be for a period of not less than the remainder of the 2025 calendar year but not greater than calendar year 2026. Consideration shall be given to include annual renewal periods as mutually acceptable.**
- 4. Such discussions shall be conducted by a Committee of the Board comprised of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board with the ability to include an external entity, who is not a Director of the Board, having experience and expertise in such Contract Service models.**
- 5. The Committee shall provide a status report of interest to the Board of Directors no later than the Regular Board of Directors Meeting of April 16, 2025.**
- 6. The Committee may negotiate and tender proposed terms of an IGA for this purpose. However, any proposed contract will be brought to the full Board and must be voted upon in a public meeting with this topic on the agenda. Motion received a second. Discussion: Chief Petersen invited to participate in this matter – to be noted in a separate motion. Motion carried unanimously. Motion carried unanimously.**

**A motion was made to retain Chief Dan Petersen as an external member of the Contract for Services Committee and as an extension of our current contract agreement; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

Air Packs Captain Alvarado addressed matter of compatibility of 19 air packs recently purchased. Wants 3 more air packs from Scott, to serve as backup equipment, at a cost of about \$20,000. **Motion made to approve purchase of three Scott air packs at a cost of up to \$26,000; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

Public Comment Ms. Linda Smith expressed gratitude that the July 4 picnic will be held this year.

Future Meetings The next regular board meeting will be April 16, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment There being no further business, **upon a motion, second, and vote, the board adjourned at 9:07 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Recording Secretary

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

on February 27 and 28, 3 to 6 pm, for Board discussion of strengths and weaknesses and options for the future of the fire district. A report from Mr. Petersen may be available by Feb. 27.

**New Business** Colorado SB 24-194 was discussed regarding establishment of impact fees and sales tax. This law went into effect in August 2024. It enables districts who provide emergency service to impose an impact fee on certain new construction and to levy a sales tax to generate additional revenue for the district. Due to timing considerations and limitations for imposing and implementing such a fee or tax, the District should consider if they wish to begin this process. **A motion was made to initiate an investigation with staff re the potential procedures and costs involved in determining if Black Forest Fire District would benefit from pursuing actions available under SB 24-194; second; motion carried.** Concerning the imposition of a sales tax on the residents of a special district, such a tax would have to be approved by the voters in an election in either May or November.

Lexipol Policy Binders: An editing process of the binders met with limited success due to disparate suggestions and Ms. Emry suggested a modified process to finalize the information. It was suggested that each director redline their copy of the binder, and that all binders then be given to a board committee of two directors who could pull all the comments/corrections together for a unified end product. **Upon a motion and second, Directors Abendschan and Tarvainen were appointed as the committee of two directors to aggregate and finalize the edits in the binders; motion carries.**

Ambulance Billing RFP: There are several competent billing companies available and pertinent data will be compiled for the Board's consideration at a future meeting. This subject was tabled.

Chair Dowden reported that several staff members have contacted him with comments, concerns, and suggestions and have asked for input and discussion. Concerns noted include transparency or a lack of transparency, information on the future of the district, financial viability and impacts of exclusion, job layoffs, delayed decisions, need for leadership and a fulltime chief, consideration of internal candidates for the chief position, career positions, lack of promotional status and testing, lack of clarity, more career opportunities, an HR position, bringing issues to the board.

**Future Meetings** The next regular board meeting will be March 19, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. A community stakeholder workshop regarding the fire chief position will be held February 24, 7 to 9 pm at station 1. A needs analysis workshop for the BFFD will be scheduled for February 27-28, 2025, 3 to 6 pm, at Station 1.

**Adjournment** There being no further business, **upon a motion, second, and vote, the board adjourned at 8:55 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Arkowski  
Recording Secretary

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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- 79 calls in last month.
- EDARP participation at 100%.
- Met with Flying Horse North, continuing work on water supply. FHN is considering using Cherokee Water District for water supply. BFFD would not forego a water supply by acquiring a tender from FHN. Annexation is not being considered for FHN.

**Old Business** Chair Dowden stated that clarification of the health insurance differential has been requested. When the budget was adopted, the insurance differential plan was reinstated, and was to be paid out annually in December. That is part of the 2025 Wage and Leave Schedule adoption. Chief Bartlett advised that the Schedule needs updating because BFFD now has fulltime wildland employee technicians, and they are entitled to vacation and sick leave accrual. The differential vacation accrual rate for wildland technicians is 144 hours per year, whereas operations accrue at 192 hours per year and administrative accrues at 160 hours per year. All employees accrue sick leave at the same rate. Time in grade steps also need updating. The Schedule will indicate maximum accrual possible. Discussion ensued re time in grade and a method for including it in policy. This will be included in Lexipol documentation to eliminate the need for annual changes. **A motion was made to adopt the amended 2025 Wage and Leave Schedule with notations as discussed; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

**New Business** Accounting firm: The former CPA resigned with short notice at the end of 2024. Various accounting personnel have been assigned by the overseeing accounting firm to perform accounting duties and Ms. Lisa Emry has been working with them in an attempt to bring them up to speed on the BFFD financial system. Unfortunately, they are all temporary and the transition has been problematic. Chief Bartlett will assist in formulating an RFP to select a CPA who will be able to work efficiently with BFFD. **A motion was made to initiate a process for identifying a replacement accounting firm, a process that will be assisted by Chief Bartlett, motion seconded, carried unanimously.**

Military leave policy: Information is pending on requirements in Special District law concerning accommodating military leave policy. Attorney Glesne will be updating the board.

Aspen Meadows Filing 4 is moving forward with their exclusion from the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, and publication of the intent is required for a two-week period in the Gazette-Telegraph newspaper. This action was noted in September 2024 and has been tabled since then. The check they tendered for this event has expired. **A motion was made to accept the exclusion request from Aspen Meadows Filing 4; motion seconded; motion carried.** Ms. Dunn will arrange for the publication and the obtaining of a replacement check.

The board held a work session on January 4, centered on alternative service delivery models for BFFD, and aimed at identification of district needs. Mr. Dan Petersen, of Petersen Consulting & Coaching, has experience with alternative service delivery models, and addressed the work session.

At the January 15 board meeting, he was asked for his opinion on what an abbreviated model would be like for BFFD. The steps he outlined included gathering information, securing data about officers and crew, identifying stakeholders, and organizing a two-day workshop to address questions and challenges, develop strategies, and a deeper discussion on options available. Community members' participation in the meetings is important and they should be included in discussions. The cost for an abbreviated study is \$10,000 or less, with more comprehensive studies costing \$25,000 and to include AP Triton services. Services costing more than \$25,000 require a solicitation by the board. Two-day options for a meeting were explored for February, emphasizing the importance of the meeting being on two consecutive days.

Comments from attendees at the board meeting reflected that the BFFD has significant problems that must be addressed quickly, and recommendations that the community be involved in the work session. **A motion was made to retain Dan Petersen to develop a needs analysis for the Black Forest Fire District, with a Community Stakeholder Information Meeting to be held on February 24, 7:00 to 9:00 pm, and a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges (SWOC) process for the Board of Directors on February 27 and 28, 2025, 3:00 to 9:00 pm; motion seconded; motion carries.**

In order to accommodate potentially large numbers of attendees, the station bay will be utilized for the work sessions.

**A motion was made to limit the cost of the BFFD study by Mr. Petersen to \$15,000; motion seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

**Command Staff Models** Discussion ensued on workable structure for staff management of the department, in balance with the impending results of the needs assessment. Chiefs Bartlett and Rocco are

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proposing strategies involving differing scenarios. Needs identified by Chief Bartlett include possible positions for temporary staff captains to help with plan reviews, EMS, inspections, training, and so forth.

**A motion was made to conduct a search for a permanent fire chief, with a proviso that it could be a temporary position; motion seconded; discussion.** Some directors and meeting attendees disagreed with the motion noting fire fighters are willing to wait until more direction for the department is available from the analysis study; some argued against hiring a chief at this time because it could add to problems of the department; the work of the interim chiefs was recognized as beneficial to stabilizing and leading the BFFD, and hiring a new chief would add confusion; it was noted that several months could be needed to hire a chief; public comments recommended the board of directors stay with their current path and not post a solicitation that may not engage desired potential applicants; **a vote was taken resulting in three no's and two aye's; the motion failed.**

**Future Meetings** The next regular board meeting will be February 19, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. A community stakeholder workshop regarding the fire chief position will be held February 24, 7 to 9 pm at station 1. A needs analysis workshop for the BFFD will be scheduled for February 27-28, 2025, 3 to 9 pm, at Station 1.

**Adjournment** There being no further business, **upon a motion, second, and vote, the board adjourned at 9:21 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Arkowski  
Recording Secretary