

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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 22, 2026, such meeting duly posted for public notice.

A quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair K. Tarvainen.

Directors present: K. Tarvainen/J. Abendschan/T. Joyce/J. Tarvainen James Eddy after swearing in.

Directors absent: None

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

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

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

Minutes A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes for the June 24, 2026 regular board meeting and the July 1, 2026 special meeting; the motion carried unanimously.

A planned recognition ceremony for staff members was postponed due to members being called out for an emergency.

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 \$1,470,958; ambulance revenue \$34,509; interest \$5,849.
- Notable expenses – Mitigation lending cache \$6,406 (grant funds); Station 2 A/C repair \$2,223; Parts for fire apparatus \$5,555.
- Hours worked – Total hours 7,543, 228 OT, 254 hours deployment.

Community Risk Reduction/Planning – Section Lead Rachel Dunn:

- Mitigation – awarded a \$15,000 grant from Ready Set Go, which will facilitate lending equipment to residents to assist with mitigation work.
- Brush truck returned from Porter Fire, AZ.
- Type 3 currently deployed to Willow Fire in Leadville, CO.
- Assisted with Aspen Acres Fire.
- Pine needle collection on July 11-12 was very successful, with about 1,300 bags collected – over 14 tons. Another collection is scheduled for September 12.

Fleet Management (Gavin Smith)

- Type 3 operational.

Chief Cerrone Operations Report (Chief Rocco)

- 99 total calls - 5 fire, 71 EMS, 23 other; 623 training hours; mutual aid for grass fires.
- Developing Fire Marshal inspection program.
- Storage facility in planning/approval phase.
- Multiple residential developments in planning/approval phase.

Chief Rocco – Updates from the Chief's Office

- New engine is nearly complete.
- A new chief truck is planned, a vehicle that is within the budget limits.

Old Business – District Bylaws. The District Bylaws have been reviewed by all directors, with changes as needed. **A motion was made and seconded to approve the District Bylaws as presented; the motion carried unanimously.** The document will be signed by all directors and sealed.

Impact Fee Clarification Concerning questions surrounding the definition of what constitutes the "above-grade living area" in new construction, a letter from BBC Research stated that the El Paso County Assessor data for above-grade living area is also referred to as gross living area, and does not include garages. The impact fee and revenue projections should be calculated on the gross living area, and the 1.94 square footage fee is adequate. If garages are to be added in the calculation, the 1.94 fee will need to be changed. **A motion was made to amend the impact fee schedule to clarify that the gross living area will be defined as the above grade living area and will exclude the garage; the motion was**

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seconded; upon a vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Vacation and Sick Leave Accrual Chief Rocco proposed to match the line for staff to be held at 80 hours of staff time, starting now, for vacation and sick leave. Currently, there is no cap on this accrual. **A motion was made to cap vacation rollover to 40 hours for exempt employees and put this change in the policy handbook; motion was seconded; motion carried unanimously.** This matter segued into a lengthy discussion concerning job duties for administrative personnel who routinely are called into duty outside of their normal working hours. It was agreed that this situation needs to be corrected.

DFM Pay Addition to Wage and Leave Schedule The Board considered implementation of a Division of the Fire Marshal/Office of Emergency Management position, a temporary duty assignment, a 40-hour week, reporting to the Deputy Chief. The job description was reviewed, noting that this will be a temporary position at the beginning and that the job requirements will be analyzed initially to ensure all areas will be covered. **A motion was made to approve a temporary position in the Office of Emergency Management, in the Division of the Fire Marshal, for a six-month period, at a pay rate of \$95,000 per year, such position to be reviewed at the end of the six-month period; motion seconded; upon a vote the motion was carried unanimously.**

New Business Board of Directors Vacancy Former Board Director Nate Dowden has resigned from the Board, creating a vacancy that must be filled within 60 days. A public announcement was made requesting letters of interest from individuals who may be interested in filling the position until the next Board election. A letter was received from Black Forest Fire District resident James Eddy, who was present at the meeting. Mr. Eddy spoke to his background and experience in the fire service, and his desire to be of service to his community. **A motion was made to nominate James Eddy to fill the vacant Board position; the motion was seconded; the motion carried unanimously.** Mr. Eddy read the Oath of Office for the Board position, which he then signed, and it was notarized by Secretary Arkowski.

Sales Tax Initiative: Chief Rocco spoke to the reduction in income and increases in expenses that will increasingly affect the ability of the District to provide reliable service. The collection of a sales taxes is an important revenue source for the District. The application must be completed by July 23, 2026 in order to be on the election calendar for the November 2026 election. A sales tax of one percent (1%) is the proposed amount for Black Forest Fire District residents. This tax amount may produce \$1.75 million to \$2 million dollars per year for the Fire District. This amount of additional income would help with recruitment and retention of personnel and fire equipment requirements. The Directors were queried for their opinion on such an initiative, with all directors stating their agreement with this action to help the finances of the Black Forest Fire District. **A motion was made to allow the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District to apply for a sales tax initiative ballot question on the Fall November 2026 ballot; motion was seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

An application will be submitted to El Paso County Election Department notifying them of the intent of the Black Forest Fire District to participate in the Fall November 2026 election. The legal department (CEGRLaw) will also be notified.

Vehicle Update: Documentation is needed signifying which individuals are authorized to purchase vehicles, and which individuals, with their titles in the organization, are authorized to sign documents on behalf of the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District concerning the purchase and the loan documents for the purchase of vehicles. For the purposes of historical financial records and to satisfy banking records, the purchase of the Front Range Fire Apparatus for a purchase price of \$882,172.50 was approved by the Board of Directors in a Board of Directors meeting on October 18, 2023. As clarified by Chair Kiersten Tarvainen, the following individuals are authorized to sign any documents required for the purchase of vehicles and the securing of any loans for the purchase of vehicles: The Chair of the Board, the Vice-Chair of the Board, and the Treasurer of the Board.

Correspondence: Thank you note from residents after assistance from the Fire Department.

Future Meetings: The next regular board meeting will be held on August 26, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. Future meetings will be carried by MS Team rather than Zoom.

Adjournment: There being no further business, **upon a motion, second, and unanimous vote, the board adjourned at 7:10 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Arkowski
Recording Secretary