

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE
COLORADO RIVER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SEPTEMBER 10, 2024
STATION 41, 1850 RAILROAD AVE., RIFLE, CO 81650**

Chairperson Lambert called the regularly scheduled meeting to order at 6:42 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Board Members Present:

Alan Lambert, President
Dick Miller, Secretary
Adria Milton-Baker, Treasurer
Addy Bristol, Vice President

Absent:

Paige Haderlie, Director

Others Present:

Leif Sackett, Fire Chief
Zach Pigati, Operations/Wildland Division Chief
Scott Van Slyke, EMS/Training Division Chief
John Gredig, IT Director
PJ Tillman, Administrative Director
Dino Ross, Legal Counsel for the District (Via Conference Call)
Bill Smith, Lieutenant (Via Conference Call)
Jerrod Merriam, Battalion Chief

A motion was made by Vice President Bristol and seconded by Secretary Miller to excuse Director Haderlie from the meeting.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

NONE

CONSENT AGENDA:

President Lambert requested to amend the minutes from the August 13, 2024, meeting to reflect the correct ending time of the executive session. A motion was made to by President Lambert to approve the consent agenda items with the noted adjustment to the minutes, which was seconded by Vice President Bristol and passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

LEGAL COUNSEL UPDATE:

Attorney Ross updated the Board on House Bill HB24B-1001, which the governor recently signed into law. Passage of this new law resulted in the withdrawal of Initiatives 50 and 108 from the November 2024 Statewide election. The 32-page bill establishes a 10.5% cap on revenue growth during each two-year assessment cycle and a further reduction in the assessment rates for almost all property classifications. The new law is complex, and his firm's analysis is continuing.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Sackett stated that House Bill HB24B-1001 could potentially reduce the District's tax revenue by 5-10%, which would result in a loss of approximately \$500,000. He highlighted the challenges of inflation on operations and thanked local representatives for their responses to the letters he sent them. The District is waiting for a bid to purchase and install the exhaust removal systems and is considering a grant to replace ageing radios. He also announced the retirement of a valued team member, Ken McCracken, after 22 years of service and concluded with a moment of remembrance for the 23rd anniversary of 9/11.

NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS:

a. Fire Chief/Administration: Appoint Administrative Director Tillman as 2025 Budget Officer

Secretary Miller motioned to approve the 2025 Budget Calendar and to appoint Administrative Director Tillman as the 2025 Budget Officer, which was seconded by Vice President Bristol. The motion was approved unanimously.

b. Fire Chief/Administration: Review FY 2025 budget philosophy

Chief Sackett reviewed CRFR's fiscal year 2025 budget, noting a 26.7% decrease in assessed valuation, resulting in a loss of about \$3.5 million. While challenging, these figures align with 2021 projections, leading to a conservative budgeting approach focused on needs. Key considerations include potential capital expenses like replacing a Type 6 vehicle and a 13.5% increase in health insurance premiums. Chief Sackett emphasized managing unforeseen costs responsibly for the taxpayers. Additionally, the Chief Staff is discussing remodeling Station 61 instead of constructing a new facility.

c. Fire Chief/Administration: Review of alternative funding sources

Chief Sackett and IT Director Gredig discussed alternative funding sources for Colorado River Fire Rescue due to recent funding decreases. IT Director Gredig made a presentation to the Board regarding imposing impact fees on new developments and seeking voter approval for the District to assess a sales tax. Attorney Ross added that with the new law established by SB24-194, the District can impose impact fees directly without having to obtain the permission of a municipality or the county to impose them. The consensus of the Board was to explore these options, but seeking voter approval of a sales tax would likely not occur until at least 2026.

OLD BUSINESS/DISCUSSION ITEMS/FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:

NONE

OPERATIONS/WILDLAND UPDATES:

Wildland Chief Pigati reported a busy summer, with the crews being deployed a lot. Next Thursday there will be a Battalion Chief meeting to address overlooked procedures and catch up on pending tasks. He noted that billing has reached \$2.2 million this year and expressed his commitment to providing future breakdowns of actual versus operational costs for improved transparency.

EMS/TRAINING UPDATES:

EMS/Training Division Chief Van Slyke congratulated Paramedic Billings on obtaining a State paramedic certification. Now, he is progressing through the Field Training Evaluation Program. Division Chief Van Slyke and Fleet Mechanic Kreig Kasten will soon inspect new and remounted ambulances in Charlotte and Columbus, allowing them to finalize state grants and enhance the fleet. He is expecting \$255,000 from the Medicaid Supplemental Payment Program, surpassing the budgeted amount by \$30,000 compared to last year.

PREVENTION/FLEET/FACILITIES UPDATES:

Chief Sackett reviewed Prevention Division Chief Moon's report, which covered a recent sauna fire and a vehicle fire near a building, both handled effectively. Kudos were given to Community Risk Reduction Specialists/PIO Maria Nechkash, Facilities and Ground Maintenance Eric Davis, Fire Inspector Kurt Lundin, and Chief Moon for their hard work in preparing the station for the open house. Eric focused on landscaping, while Maria coordinated the event, ensuring everything ran smoothly. The open house drew approximately 400-500 attendees and featured activities like cooking, tug-of-war, and a popular water fight, highlighting strong community engagement and teamwork.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/DATA UPDATES:

IT Director Gredig stated that a recent fire incident was detected via Pano AI, which enables accurate identification and location of smoke. A motor home fire was reported, with alerts received shortly after the incident began. He stated that the average daily calls have increased from 6.6 in 2020 to 7.8, indicating a gradual rise in activity across the District.

ADMINISTRATION/FINANCE UPDATES:

Administrative Director Tillman reported on her progress with the budget calendar, confirming that a notice of a public hearing on the 2025 Budget has been published. She highlighted her own commitments due to deployment, which have kept her busy. Administrative Support Assistant Kortnie Valencia will be attending the Special District Association's annual conference.

DEPARTMENT GOOD NEWS:

Chief Sackett presented several highlights of community engagement. Community Risk Reduction Specialists/PIO Maria Nechkash, Firefighter/Medic Ian Fradl, Firefighter/EMT James Noah, Firefighter/Medic Dasha Stowe, and Firefighter/EMT Adam Werner participated in a home fire safety outreach, receiving a thank you card for their efforts. Adam Werner also contributed by managing EMS inventory and cleaning the gym, without anyone requesting that he do so. Battalion Chief Merriam's crew received appreciation from a woman they assisted during a cardiac incident, particularly commending FF/Medic Colin Mason's demeanor. Additionally, the Department took part in a photo shoot for the Disabled Equestrian Institute's 2025 calendar, which will feature local emergency heroes. The event showcased the Department's commitment to community involvement.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Vice President Bristol expressed gratitude for being part of the system for so long, noting the valuable lessons she has learned. She is proud to be associated with it and thanked everyone for their hard work. She also thanked Ken McCracken for his 22 years of dedicated service.

Treasurer Milton-Baker expressed that she had a fantastic time at the open house and was surprised by the display highlighting the high cost of the gear, noting that it is great knowledge for the community to see.

Secretary Miller mentioned that he had a great time at the open house and requested Colorado River Fire Rescue apparel for the Board to wear at upcoming community events.

President Lambert extended thanks to the entire CRFR crew for organizing the open house. The event showcased many happy attendees and provided valuable education, along with

support from various agencies. Special recognition was given to Ken McCracken for his 22 years of dedicated service and contributions to CRFR.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no other business to come before the Board, Chairperson Lambert adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

APPROVAL:

The foregoing Minutes, which have been approved by the affirmative majority vote of the Board of Directors of the Colorado River Fire Protection District, are a true and accurate record of the meeting held on the date stated above.

Date: 8 Oct 24

Bristol

Date: Oct 8, 2024

Adrian Wilson Baker