



ROARING FORK FIRE RESCUE AUTHORITY

Authority FINAL Meeting Minutes 3/17/26

Roll Call: President Van Walraven, Treasurer Striegler, Board Members Duroux, Young, and Heivly, Vice President Arthur, Attorney Cole (Life Size), Fire Marshals Mele and Stott, Facilities Director Klein, Chief Thompson, Finance Director Thompson, Secretary Diamond, IT Director Johnson, Deputy Chief of Operations Cornelius (Life Size), and Bill Boineau.

Approval of Minutes, February 17, 2026: Treasurer Striegler moved to approve the minutes from 2/17/26. Board Member Duroux seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Attorney Report: Attorney Cole reported ongoing negotiations with Comcast to bring fiber to Station 42's dispatch and fire station, and is revising the easement and main Comcast agreement for Station 45. Chief Thompson stated that Comcast will install fiber at three stations in exchange for an easement at Yarrow Dr. Chief Thompson requested Board authorization for President Van Walraven to sign the Station 45 easement and Comcast agreement.

Board Member Young moved to approve the Grant of Easement with Comcast, subject to attorney review. Vice President Arthur seconded. The motion to accept the agreement passed unanimously; no members opposed.

Chief Report: Chief Thompson noted the Wember project update in the board packet is three weeks old and reviewed related photos. Chief Thompson said Station 42 is projected to be completed by mid-October. Chief Thompson said the three-story training tower will be finished ahead of schedule.

-Chief Thompson informed the Board that the Station 42 construction timeline was budgeted for 12 months but extended to 24 months. Chief Thompson said the architect requested an additional \$180,000 to cover their cost, which he agreed to pay from the Goldyn reserve fund without affecting the overall budget. Chief Thompson reported that some contingency funds were needed, but no further major costs are expected.



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-Chief Thompson said the Snowmass Village roundabout project continues. Chief Thompson said Assistant Fire Marshal Pidcock attends weekly meetings, receives feedback, and confirms emergency access will remain available until the project is completed next fall.

-Chief Thompson told the Board that construction will begin at JW Drive on the Crown Mountain side of Highway 82 in El Jebel. Chief Thompson said this project will ultimately improve vehicle queuing.

-Chief Thompson reported that tourism is down, and ambulance revenue may decrease by 40%. However, summer typically brings increased demand for services.

-Chief Thompson reminds the Board that Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele will retire next month. Chief Thompson said a celebration will be held at the Viceroy on April 3rd from 4 to 6:30 p.m. and will be advertised on the website. The Board thanks Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele for his service. Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele expressed confidence in Fire Marshal Stott and her team. Chief Thompson hopes to contract with Fire Marshal Mele on the resilience code and assist with many forthcoming inspections.

-Chief Thompson reiterated that each station has a ready wildland truck. Regional Chiefs are considering restrictions due to low water levels, which may mean a loss of ditch water for some. Chief Thompson said that with our neighboring counties, we are preparing for wildfire, aided by Blackhawk and Skyhawk helicopters. With AI cameras and mitigation, better wildfire response is expected.

Deputy Chief Cornelius added that annual wildland refreshers (RT-130s) will take place the first week in April.

Finance Report: Finance Director Thompson reported that last Wednesday's audit was successful.



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-Finance Director Thompson reported that Pitkin County will begin wiring tax payments for the Authority and Snowmass Village, replacing checks. Finance Director Thompson is also working to arrange wire transfers for Basalt.

-Finance Director Thompson said four crew members for wildfire severity have been hired. Finance Director Thompson is working with the Division of Fire Prevention and Control to prepare the personnel document for wildfire season. Finance Director Thompson said this paperwork is required for billing and approval whenever the Authority is called for a fire.

Board Member Young asked if the Wildfire Severity Crew is being brought on earlier due to drought conditions. Finance Director Thompson noted that two of the four crew members are college students and all crew members will start at the end of May. Finance Director Thompson also reminded the Board that future full-time needs are being addressed through the sales tax initiative.

-Finance Director Thompson stated that decreases in ambulance billing are expected to impact finances in June or July due to processing times. Finance Director Thompson said spending will be monitored closely through the fall.

-Finance Director Thompson said LOSAP will be funded in April, and due to a switch in formatting, it will be presented in April.

-Fire Marshal Stott continues work on the Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code, to be presented at the next meeting. Fire Marshal Stott told the Board that Pitkin County signs its Code today, Basalt is drafting its own, and Eagle County will be ready at its next meeting. Fire Marshal Stott said large construction projects, wildfire assessment training, and fire inspector hiring continue.

Cornelius Report: Deputy Chief Cornelius reiterated that we have a significant decrease in demand for our services. Deputy Chief Cornelius said that for February, we had 251 total incidents, 113 of which were EMS-related, or a decrease of 7%. Deputy Chief Cornelius said that year-to-date, for January and February, we were down 114 incidents, or 18%, to 509 total incidents year-to-date, 232 EMS-related. Deputy Chief Cornelius said for ambulance transports in



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January and February last year, we evaluated 279 patients, and this year in January and February, we evaluated 232, a 17% decrease.

-Deputy Chief Cornelius announced that Terrence Leitch has returned as a paramedic after completing classes at Colorado Mountain College. Deputy Chief Cornelius said three additional students will complete training and return in August.

-Deputy Chief Cornelius reported that the RMS transition is on track. He is submitting data to NERIS and NEMESIS and plans to transition to the assets and inventory platform in April.

-Deputy Chief Cornelius said the CAD transition that is replacing the new CAD system in dispatch will take place over several months, but won't be complete until 2027.

-Deputy Chief Cornelius reported that the Iturri Mini Pumper is delayed pending replacement of roll-up doors. Deputy Chief Cornelius said once complete, it will be shipped to Denver for graphics and then displayed at the FDIC in Indianapolis in April.

-Chief Thompson commended Deputy Chief Cornelius, HR Director Thomas, and the firefighters present at the Colorado Mountain College Career Expo for engaging with future firefighters.

Facilities Report: Facilities Director Klein told the Board that we have one vacancy at Station 45, a studio, that we are holding for the Wildland Severity Crew. Facilities Director Klein said he is in the process of repainting and upgrading a 1-bedroom at Station 41; it will be available for rent next month. Facilities Director Klein said we are currently advertising for the two-bedroom at Willits. Chief Thompson reminded the Board that the Forest Service is providing two rooms in the El Jebel Bunkhouse for the wildfire crew in exchange for CPR classes.



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Master Plan: Chief Thompson told the board we are checking off lists, some of which were ISO, a lot were master plan, and short-and long-term goals for the sales tax and wish list. Chief Thompson said included on the list is the Wildland division needing a year-round position to support our community and improve response times. Chief Thompson informed the Board that the tax list will go to the consultant, and the consultant will give the Board a presentation next month.

Public Comments: None

Board Member Comments: Board Member Duroux told the Board he attended a Basalt Emergency Management Committee presentation on mitigation at the base of Basalt Mountain. Board Members said it was good to see mitigation around the Wilds as well. Chief Thompson added that you can also see the Sopris Mountain Ranch mitigation, which is still a work in progress. Chief Thompson said that receiving grant funding through the Wildfire Collaborative has been very beneficial.

-Board Member Heivly raised a discussion on employee turnover among those working for the Authority for more than 5 years. Board Member Heivly is discouraged that we are losing long-term members, not just due to housing issues. Board Member Heivly, who argued that trust equals retention, suggested conducting an anonymous survey to determine whether there is a cause for the lack of trust and job satisfaction. The Board is interested in exit interview data beyond housing issues. Discussion

Treasurer Striegler reminded the Board that they are not involved in the Authority's day-to-day operations. Treasurer Striegler said this Board is here to review and approve policies. Treasurer Striegler states that the only person who answers directly to us is the Chief, and vice versa. Treasurer Striegler told the Board that the employee handbook we approved is in place, and we need to encourage members to follow the guidelines we have already spelled out. Treasurer Striegler said the Board cannot help any employee who does not follow the grievance process. Treasurer Striegler reminded the Board that Deputy Chief Cornelius has an open-door policy and hopes the crew feels comfortable speaking their



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mind. Discussion.

Board Member Young suggested a Board retreat. President Van Walraven recommended involving HR Director Thomas.

Staff Comments: None

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Motion to Adjourn: Vice President Arthur moved to adjourn the meeting. Board Member Young seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting ended at 10:13 a.m.

To watch this meeting in its entirety: <https://youtu.be/KivMSwNcLuM>