



ROARING FORK FIRE RESCUE AUTHORITY

The meeting was called to order at 9:02. 9/16/2025

Roll Call: President Van Walraven, Vice President Arthur, Board Member Duroux (Lifesize), Treasurer Striegler, Board Member Young (Lifesize). Others in attendance included Board Member Spitz, William Boineau, Calvin Klein (Lifesize), Division Chief of EMS Luttrell (Lifesize), Finance Director Thompson, Chief Thompson, HR Director Thomas, IT Director Johnson, Deputy Chief of Operations Cornelius, Secretary Diamond, Vonda Williams, Joe Farstad, William Boineau, FF Blangsted, FF Cader, FF Klebes, FF Wells, and Fire Marshal Mele.

Joe Farstad provided an update on the Wember construction project at Station 42. Mr. Farstad explains to the Board that the project has been divided into six completed packages. Mr. Farstad stated that the IGA with the County has been signed, aligning Dispatch with our program. Mr. Farstad said all materials for Station 42 are on hand. Mr. Farstad added that the Fleet building is expected to be operational by the end of October. Mr. Farstad said major demolition is underway, with the addition scheduled for completion in 2026 and renovation planned for completion in the fall of that year. Mr. Farstad stated that the training tower is expected to be completed by the end of 2025. Mr. Farstad gave the Board an accounting recap, reviewing risk and related photos. Chief Thompson added that he expects Station 42 to be completed by next fall.

Chief's Report: Chief Thompson said he received some criticism for supporting the roundabout by Owl and Brush Creek, which is also supported by the Snowmass Board.

-Chief Thompson said the balloon festival, with Deputy Chief Mele's involvement, was initially grounded and later rained out except for Sunday.

-Chief Thompson informed the Board that the Severity Crew remains on schedule for completion by the end of the month, with only one home assessment remaining.

Finance Report: Finance Director Thompson stated that the assessed valuation received in August shows a 10% increase in Eagle County, a 3% increase in Basalt, and a 1% decrease in Snowmass, resulting in a net change of approximately \$425,000 in property tax. Finance Director Thompson stated that both districts made Gallagher adjustments, and we can maintain the residential assessment rate (RAR) at 0.72 by adjusting our mill levies to ensure we don't lose any revenue as the RAR has decreased. Finance Director Thompson said this year was significant, as the RAR decreased to 6.25 and may drop to 6.15. Finance Director Thompson stated that using the .625 factor resulted in an overall \$700,000 adjustment. Finance Director Thompson explained that since then, we dropped to 6.25 and are now up to \$1.3 million. Finance Director Thompson goes on to explain that in 2027, the budget year, the RAR will increase to 6.8, and half of that amount will go away.

-Finance Director Thompson said the staff is reviewing the introductory budget, which includes an 8% increase in the staff budget compared to last year. Finance Director Thompson explains the highlights of the budget, noting a \$150,000 increase in revenue on the wildfire side. Finance Director Thompson stated that the wildfires generated approximately \$395,000 in overall revenue this year compared to \$374,000 in 2024. Finance Director Thompson stated that there



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was a significant increase in our medical insurance this year. Finance Director Thompson stated that health insurance for the State of Colorado increased by 37-40%, and dental coverage also increased by 5%. Finance Director Thompson said we are continuing with the step plan, which involves a 5% increase for the first five years; thereafter, it transitions into a bonus situation. Finance Director Thompson explains premium pay will increase hourly rates and also affect their ability to work overtime. Finance Director Thompson explained that longevity pay will now be paid as a bonus that is distributed on the last day of the year rather than on their anniversary date. Finance Director Thompson said she had budgeted for a 3% COLA for this year. Finance Director Thompson said they reclassified one of the full-time administrators from the operations department to the training department. Finance Director Thompson reminded the Board that we pay mandatory overtime based on 212 hours, regardless of PTO usage. Finance Director Thompson said she is still working on salary adjustments to bring them up to 110% of the market rate. Finance Director Thompson noted that there had been several staffing changes due to attrition and position reassignments.

-Finance Director Thompson told the Board that our payroll increased by \$400,000 due to attrition, job changes, leadership transitions, and retirements, resulting in a \$676,000 increase for operations.

-Finance Director Thompson noted that notable items in the budget now include the Pitkin County Regional Dispatch Center's increased bill by 71%, resulting in a \$82,000 budget impact over last year. Discussion.

-Finance Director Thompson told the Board that per diem is now allocated by department. Finance Director Thompson stated that the building budget increased by 50% to cover payroll for the Facilities Director, repairs for older buildings, and a significant rise in condo assessments for employee housing.

-Finance Director Thompson said our major capital purchases include an Iturri Type Three, an Iturri Type One, a building maintenance truck, and SCBA replacement. Finance Director Thompson said the Station 44 garage doors will also be addressed.

-Finance Director Thompson will present a supplemental document at year-end to establish a new starting balance for 2026. Finance Director Thompson said the supplemental budget amends the 2025 budget to align more closely with actuals and adjusts the opening and closing balances based on the 2024 audited financial statements. Finance Director Thompson said the last column shows the proposed 2026 budget. Finance Director Thompson said that, including all of our expenditures, we are at \$510,000 in the black. Finance Director Thompson reminds the Board that this is due to the Gallagher adjustment and won't most likely be here in 2027.

-Treasurer Striegler reminds the Board of the importance of tracking the monies that come in and how we spend them. Treasurer Striegler goes on to say we have to look at the sustainability of the programs we have in place. Treasurer Striegler recommends that we closely monitor our expenses over the next three to five years, ensuring we can maintain our current status quo with the programs we have in place. Finance Director Thompson informed the Board that securing community support for a fire department sales tax could be a long-term, viable way to keep pace with the community's growth; more viable than relying on property taxes.



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HR Report: HR Director Thomas said recruitment for five part-time and one full-time position closed yesterday, and interviews are scheduled for the 29th. HR Director Thomas added that premium pay will increase hourly rates and also affect their ability to work overtime. HR Director Thomas explained that longevity pay will now be distributed on the last day of the year.

FM Report: Chief Fire Marshal Mele told the Board that wildfire inspections remain consistent with last year, totaling nearly 90. Chief Fire Marshal Mele said they will follow up in November to gather feedback on the completed inspections.

-Chief Fire Marshal Mele said the Colorado State Wildfire Resilience Code is progressing quickly through Snowmass Village. Chief Fire Marshal Mele has a work session with the town's attorney, Jeff Conklin, who has prepared the document for adoption, pending public comment. Chief Fire Marshal Mele said a town press release will be issued soon. Chief Fire Marshal Mele informed the Board that Dr. Hussam Mahmoud will develop a wildfire model with an 86% accuracy, identifying vulnerable buildings and potential escape routes. Chief Fire Marshal Mele said the Town of Marble has completed data collection, which will be shared soon. Chief Fire Marshal Mele said that with Dr. Mahmoud's fire model, we will identify mitigation strategies for future years.

-Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele said construction projects are progressing well. Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele said the Town of Snowmass Village is considering stricter standards for existing homes, requiring compliance within 3 years. Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele said home mitigation will be possible without a remodel, though enforcement methods are still under review. Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele stated that assessment fees will increase, with two assessments made before construction and one upon completion. Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele said the State code enforcement will be adopted and implemented by the municipality.

Discussion

Deputy Chief of Operations Cornelius Report: Deputy Chief Cornelius told the Board that a total of 305.5 volunteer hours were recorded. Deputy Chief Cornelius reminds the organization that, as it transitions from volunteer to part-time roles, the number of volunteer hours is expected to decline.

-Deputy Chief Cornelius stated that August was a busy month, with a total of 265 incidents, 110 EMS-related calls, representing a 10 percent increase. Deputy Chief Cornelius stated that the year-to-date total is 2,061 incidents, of which 913 are EMS calls. Deputy Chief Cornelius said wildland assignments will continue through the end of the month. Deputy Chief Cornelius added that it was invaluable for some of our staff to experience a six-week deployment in California.

-Deputy Chief Cornelius said Paramedic Braun has completed training and returned to duty. Deputy Chief Cornelius adds that four additional members are currently enrolled in Paramedic school, with more scheduled to participate in the future.

-Deputy Chief Cornelius told the Board that the RMS committee has selected First Due as the preferred vendor, which will enable consolidation and is anticipated to result in cost savings next year. Deputy Chief Cornelius stated that the new system will offer enhanced data access and a more user-friendly experience, with a planned go-live date of January 1.



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-Deputy Chief Cornelius said recruitment is ongoing for another full-time employee and five more part-time members. Deputy Chief Cornelius stated that the Division Chief of Training position will soon be posted and is crucial for the new facility's success. Deputy Chief Cornelius informed the Board that Division Chief of EMS Luttrell will serve in an interim capacity. Deputy Chief Cornelius said a planning meeting is scheduled for tomorrow to discuss the posting, and the vacancy is expected to last several months.

Facilities Report: Facilities Director Klein said interior drywall and repainting the inside of the bays at Station 44 are scheduled for Thursday. Facilities Director Klein added that a second painter is starting on the outside of the building, with completion expected by the end of next week.

-Facilities Director Klein said heat tape repairs are underway at Station 45. Facilities Director Klein said inspections have been completed and no major issues have been found. Facilities Director Klein said he replaced a timer, and they are replacing some connections on the heat tape, as well as grinding the concrete and repainting the lines in the bay. Facilities Director Klein added that the concrete work includes a 10-year warranty.

-Facilities Director Klein said the dead trees at Station 46 are being replaced before winter.

Master Plan: HR Director Thomas stated that part of the master plan includes establishing a Health and Safety Committee. HR Director Thomas said the first meeting was held last week, with subsequent meetings scheduled twice a week and then monthly.

-Chief Thompson added that the next major project is the generator at Station 42.

Public Comments: None

Board Member Comments: Board Member Young ends the meeting by stating "Time passes quickly, and its importance cannot be understated."

Adjournment: Vice President Arthur motioned to end the meeting. Treasurer Striegler seconded the motion and the meeting ended at 10:11.

RRFRA - <https://youtu.be/bS58LLUSrG4>