

South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District
Regular Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes
June 6, 2022

Present:	Jim Albee, Chair	Bob Baker, Fire Chief
	Renee Anderson, Vice Chair	Mike Dell'Orfano, Assistant Chief
	William Shriver, Treasurer	Tobias Kirschke, Assistant Chief
	Sue Roche	Kevin Milan, Assistant Chief
	Cindy Hathaway	Jon Adams, Assistant Chief
	Kevin Leung	Dillon Miskimins, Chief Financial Officer
	Rich Sokol	Kristin Eckmann, Chief Communications Officer
		Camie Chapman, Human Resources Director
		Bob Cole, Legal Counsel

Others Present: SMFR Staff Members

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS

A barbeque was held in recognition of outgoing board members Hank Eng and Alison Rausch.

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Chair Albee called the Regular Meeting of the South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District to order at 6:14 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Albee led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL

All of the Board members were present in person.

PUBLIC COMMENT

N/A

CONSENT AGENDA

May 2, 2022 South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District Regular Board Meeting Minutes
May 16, 2022 South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District Special Board Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Sue Roche and seconded by Cindy Hathaway to approve the consent agenda as presented. Rich Sokol abstained because he was not present at either meeting. Kevin Leung abstained from the May 2nd meeting minutes because he was not present. Bill Shriver abstained from the May 16th meeting minutes because he was not present. The remaining board members were in favor and the motion carried.

ACTION ITEMS

Election of Officers – Chief Dell'Orfano reminded that per the South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District bylaws, the board shall elect officers at the first regular meeting after the election. The positions include Chair/President, Vice-Chair/Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Since there are new board members, Director Sokol recommended directors maintain their current position and revisit the election of officers in six months.

Chair Albee reviewed the bylaws.

After discussion, the board agreed to elect officers and revisit it again next year if that is the desire of the board.

A motion was made by Bill Shriver and seconded by Sue Roche nominating Jim Albee to remain as Chair. Jim Albee accepted the nomination. All were favor and the motion carried.

A motion was made by Jim Albee and seconded by Cindy Hathaway to nominating Renee Anderson to remain as Vice Chair. Renee Anderson accepted the nomination. All were in favor and the motion carried.

A motion was made by Cindy Hathaway and seconded by Renee Anderson to nominate Sue Roche as Secretary. Sue Roche accepted the nomination. All were in favor and the motion carried.

A nomination was made by Sue Roche and seconded by Jim Albee to nominating Bill Shriver to remain as Treasurer. Bill Shriver accepted the nomination. All were in favor and the motion carried.

April 2022 Financial Statements – CFO Miskimins reviewed the financial statements, highlighting:

1. Fund balance increased by \$11.5 million compared to the prior month bringing the fund balance to a total of \$98.2 million.
2. Through April, the District has collected \$78.6 million in property taxes and \$3.2 million in specific ownership tax revenue, which reflects 62.49% collection vs. 62.22% at this time last year for property taxes, and 30.05% vs. 36.48% for specific ownership taxes.
3. As of April 30th, the District has expended \$50.5 million in the General Fund related to operations or 32.83% of the annual budget not including Capital Project transfers.
4. Ambulance transports have exceeded 2022 budget expectations by 987 transports, for a total number of transports of 7,385 through April. The District's net revenue is \$450k over the year-to-date budgeted amount and \$643k more than the same period last year. Total bad debt is increasing in 2022 as compared to 2021. Through April this year, bad debt as a % of net revenue is at 25.1% as compared to 21.3% in 2021. Collections received as % of bad debt is at 10% through April this year as compared to 12% in 2021.
5. Through April, the District has expended \$940k or 6.91% of our total budgeted expenditures in the Capital Fund.
6. As of April 30th, the District has expended \$347k on RHS buyout and exceeded the annual budget by 172%.
7. Through April, the District has billed \$787k in Plan Review Fees or 43.14% of the total budgeted amount.
8. In April the District received the \$1.6 million in proceeds from the Lima Street closing, which has been recorded under Sale of Assets in the Capital Projects Fund.

At Director Sokol's request, CFO Miskimins reviewed the bad debt and collection process.

At Chair Albee's request, CFO Miskimins informed that the RHS program reflects how much was spent through the month of April, the annual variance and represents that almost 40 percent of the annual budget has been spent already.

At Director Shriver's request, CFO Miskimins stated that the pre-paid equipment is listed on the balance sheet under non-spendable prepaid items and a prepaid schedule is also included in the packet.

At Director Leung's request, CFO Miskimins reported that all of the vacant positions were not filled at the first of the year, some remain vacant, and some members left earlier than planned, which is why the salary variance is 6%. Human Resources Director Chapman stated that about 32 people have left the organization this year, several were medical retirements and some were newer employees who had a long commute found it challenging. Chief Adams added that the physical requirements, time on the job, and a positive market, decided to take advantage of retirement. CFO Miskimins concluded that a 3.3% variance is fairly reasonable.

At Director Sokol's request, Chief Adams stated that 30 members have retired and there are probably another 25 in the pipeline, which is about 8% of the 700 total employees. Chief Adams added that Staff is working to get ahead of attrition & have added a lateral academy with 13 candidates who will be on line in 6 weeks.

A motion was made by Bill Shriver and seconded by Kevin Leung to accept the April 2022 Financial Statements as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried.

2023 Portable Radio Replacement Proposal – Emergency Communications Director March reported that our current fleet of 450 portable radios have reached the end of their useful life being 8 to 10 years old depending on the radio. Motorola, the radio's manufacturer, has announced that they will discontinue supporting our model of radio at the end of 2023. If approved, this expenditure will be budgeted and paid for in early 2023 when the radios are delivered. The cost to replace the full fleet of radios is \$3.7 million after purchase incentives and negotiating close to \$775,000 off the original cost. The District has applied for a grant through FEMA. CFO Miskimins added that if awarded the \$1.7 million from FEMA, it would be to cover the cost of the 160 riding positions with a 10% match, which is included in the \$3.7 million. Awards decisions should be announced in September. If the board approves the purchase, it will allow staff to finalize the process of procuring the portable radios so that they may be received and put in service in early 2023. The current pricing is based off the manufacturer receiving a purchase order by the end of the month.

Emergency Communications Manager Carnahan provided additional information about the style and abilities of the new radios, highlighting the blue tooth ability, dual bands and GPS.

At Director Shriver's request, EC Director March stated that if we get the order in the que by the second quarter, the radios should arrive in early 2023. CFO Miskimins added that it will be expensed in 2023, at which time the money will be expended.

At Director Leung's request, EC Director March stated that the purchase price includes a 5-year support package that covers maintenance and repair, but not replacement if stolen. After 5 years, Staff will look at purchasing additional contract services but Staff does as much in house repair as possible which will reduce the costs. EC Manager Carnahan provided an overview of the secured radio channels & reprogramming processes.

At Director Sokol's request, EC Director March stated that the district has radio management software that lists every radio ID, aliases assigned and the current number is 450, that includes a radio for 160 riding positions, 4th person radios, District Chiefs each carry 5 spare, ICT has 25 portables & uniformed staff personnel each have one.

At Director Anderson's request, EC Director March reported that every radio comes with two rechargeable batteries, the old batteries are compatible with the new radios & depending on the age of the battery the charge lasts 12 to 24 hours.

At Director Shriver's request, CFO Miskimins reported that the district has not had much success receiving FEMA grants in the past & not much feedback is received as to why but believes it is based on the true financial need of the district. Different than previous requests, this time the Local worked through its connections to have the Federal and State Offices review our grant & Staff reached out the City and County of Denver, which has been pretty successful in being awarded grants, and they also review the grant and provide feedback. At Director Leung's request, CFO Miskimins stated the FEMA grants are all or nothing. Director Sokol offered to approach the Arapahoe County Commissioners.

At Director Anderson's request, CFO Miskimins stated that we have not had much success with the counties sharing their American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds but would be worthwhile if we don't receive the grant funds.

At Chair Albee's request, CFO Miskimins informed that the radio purchase was not in the 10-year plan & it will be expensed as a capital item.

Chair Albee reminded that the Board can either act tonight or act at the next meeting to meet the pricing deadline.

The Board requested Staff to provide a general breakdown of the radio assignments, how often they are used & if needed, adjust the number of radios to be purchased.

A motion was made by Jim Albee and seconded by Rich Sokol to table this item until the June 20th special board meeting. All were in favor and the motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Board of Director Compensation – Chief Dell’Orfano stated that per Section 32-1-902(II), C.R.S., the maximum compensation for board members is 2,400 per year and \$100 per meeting. Through 2020, this compensation was further increased due to the multiple boards that our board members participated in, and the beginning date of their terms impacted their compensation caps. In 2021, this became much less complicated but staff had not changed our tracking of compensation caps. Therefore, board members were over-compensation in the range of \$300-\$500 for the year. In order to correct this oversight in as simple and transparent way possible, staff suggests that the affected board members’ compensation be reduced by the corresponding amount in 2022. Staff welcomes feedback on this direction.

All of the Board members were good with Staff’s recommendations.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Chatfield Drowning Incident – District Chief Andy Powell relayed details regarding a drowning at Chatfield Reservoir on Sunday night. A couple and their three children were at the swim beach. The daughter’s floaty drifted out into the water and the husband went to get it. He started to struggle and grabbed the buoy. A couple on shore saw him struggling and the male swam out to help but before he could get there, the husband went under the water. SMFR arrived on scene shortly after and got him to the hospital in just under 30 minutes. The hospital staff provided CPR for over an hour but unfortunately the gentleman did not survive. It was unfortunate that he did not survive; however, he felt the crews did everything to save him. DC Powell added that the PIO Group created challenge coins for the crews to give out and he gave one to the families that help try to save the gentleman & to the woman who took care of the three children.

DEI Update – Chief Baker reported that a lot of the DEI survey responses asked why we were doing this & that really nothing is broken. We would like it to stay that way. The District is made up of eight organizations, each having their own culture. He is most-familiar with the Parker Fire culture; but not so much of the other cultures. Some past cultures were not equal in the treatment of females, minorities, non-heterosexuals and other difference in people within SMFR. In April, he attended the Congressional Fire Services Institute Seminar where the keynote speaker was Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell, whose speech was about DEI. Then a couple of weeks ago he attended the Metro Chiefs Conference, which is made up of chiefs from large fire districts throughout the country, and of the three days of business meetings, two and a half were dedicated to DEI and how to continue to move in a positive direction in the fire service. In the group of 120-130 fire chiefs, females and various ethnic groups were represented, which shows the face of the Metro Chiefs has changed. The facilitator who spoke with SMFR’s female firefighters stated that we have a strong group of women in our organization, and we should be really proud of what we have here but that we need to keep moving forward.

Human Resources Director Chapman stated that a committee was created, which includes about 17 line and staff employees, and started talking about what DEI stands for at SMFR and it really came down to culture. Everyone wants a culture of belonging, inclusivity, where we are at and where we want to be. There was a 73% response rate to the survey, which gave some vision into what needs to be done to make the environment more inclusive. The committee is now working on the next phases; including communicating the interpretation of the survey, training our leaders, and putting together a plan for how things will look over the next several months and years.

Chief Baker stated that Director Eng sat on the committee & he will leave it up to the Chair to facilitate the Board’s participation. Director Leung volunteered to serve on the committee.

Director Shriver commented that the term equity has been misused and prefers the use of equality. His alma mater has adopted diversity, inclusive and equal opportunity.

Director Leung stated that he is in agreement with the use of equity, it means equal level by providing resources, unfortunately it has been weaponized, but wants to make sure that people have equal opportunities in life.

Director Sokol asked that it be brought before the board before any changes are made by the committee.

Chief Baker stated that the Committee is working on a description of what we would like the organization to be. He agrees there are struggles with the term equity. This is being done for our own organization, not whatever the other biases may be, and define it for our organization so that it has meaning. Staff will continue to provide feedback to the board but cannot commit to run everything by the board.

Director Anderson stated that she struggles also with equity and need clarity on what we are trying to accomplish, checking our culture, and does not think that we were ever not doing those things through policies and hiring practices.

Chief Kirschke added that the discussion tonight is very similar to what the committee's discussions have been. The biggest thing is communication, and that there may not be an end point.

Director Hathaway knows it is a huge task and appreciates staff taking it on.

IGA Update – Chief Dell'Orfano reminded that SMFR Resolution No. 2018-13 delegates and authorizes the Fire Chief to sign and execute on behalf of the District any contract, agreement, or application to participate in programs involving the administration and operational functions of the District. The Fire Chief has further delegated signatory authority (CFO, Assistant Chief Business Services) and established a policy that states "All contracts that contain intergovernmental agreements or sensitive political topics shall be presented to the board of directors as an informational item at the next available board meeting." A copy of the list of IGA's signed during the month of May was included in the Board packet.

At Director Anderson's request, Chief Dell'Orfano The Daniels Park Emergency Services IGA is to establish some understandings of who does what and clarifying what it means to protect their park.

SB 22-238 – CFO Miskimins reminded that a signed copy of SB 22-238, along with an explanatory document, which impacts property tax revenue on a short-term basis, were included in the packet. The bill provides a little over \$7 million in revenue for tax year 2023-2024 for SMFR and will reduce the assessment rate on commercial properties from 29 to 26.4 and also reduces assessed value by \$30,000 right off the top for commercial property. Reduces residential property assessment from 7.15 to 6.76 percent in 2023-2024, an estimated tax savings of \$274 for Colorado citizens per year. SMFR will receive 100% reimbursement on assessment increases of less than 10 percent and any reduction in revenue. More information will be provided at the budget workshop.

Chair Albee requested that Staff provide a presentation to educate the Board on how it will affect the district.

New Broker – Gallagher – CFO Miskimins informed that Human Resources Director Chapman, Chief Kirschke, and the Wellness Team took the opportunity to evaluate our benefits broker and put it out to bid to several property and liability & workers compensation to see if we could negotiate them all to be under the same broker. The top three (Lockton, IMA and Gallagher) were interviewed & Gallagher was selected to provided property & casualty and employee benefits for the District.

Election Costs & Overview – Chief Dell'Orfano distributed and reviewed the cost summary. The cost was about \$365,000 and we budgeted \$500,000. Next year will have four districts up for election so anticipate about an additional \$80,000 in costs. Staff will continue to gauge the interest in our elections and future elections plans.

At Director Sokol's request, Chief Dell'Orfano believes SDA support both moving to November and odd year elections; however, nothing was proposed for November elections but they were able to get the law changed to odd year elections for special districts with the thought that the county clerks would have time to assist with the elections. Legal Counsel Cole added that historically the county clerks have not wanted to assist because they are not familiar with the process of working with the property owner lists and added that there could be some coordinated efforts, but a coordinated election would be difficult.

At Director Anderson's request, Chief Dell'Orfano stated that the ballot was reviewed by himself, Peggy from Bob Cole's office, and Barb Andrews.

At Chair Albee's request, Chief Dell'Orfano stated that moving to an odd year election might reduce the printing costs slightly, but the cost will be basically the same.

Director Anderson stated that there was about a 10 percent return per district, which is about the same percentage of return in the prior election.

Budget Workshop – Chief Dell'Orfano reminded a survey of availability was distributed & evening options were added. He asked that the Board check their availability so we can get the workshop(s) scheduled as soon as possible.

2022 Capital Priorities – Chief Milan reminded that in 2021 a reserve study was initiated to look at the conditions of our facilities & strategic plan to see what is needed and the cost for completion over the next three years. Staff is waiting for an executive summary. Chief Milan added that the assessment also took the program for our current station development and turned it into documents that can be handed out to architects and contractors, in contractor language, for consistency and efficiency in those projects. They also put together some budget guidance for the stations.

Chief Milan provided an overview of the capital needs, including land acquisition for station relocation, station sleep hygiene and Mineral, Training and Fleet facility upgrades.

Chair Albee requested Staff provide the board with a copy of the executive summary when it is available & possibly a presentation at a future board meeting.

Local 2086 President Dzengelewski thanked the board for their time and congratulated the Directors on their election/re-election and stressed their importance to the membership. Local President Dzengelewski provided an update, highlighted a new yoga instructor focusing on health and well-being for retirees conducting classes at the new Local Facility, the successful Foundation sponsored Hockey Tournament and Whiskey & Cigar Fundraisers, Colorado Professional Firefighters State Conference coming back to Colorado and will take place in-person in Fort Collins, declaration to collect \$125,000 during the Labor Day Weekend MDA Fill-the-Boot Campaign, Chili Cookoff scheduled for September 30th at the new McGregor Center, and a Charity Baseball Tournament in Highlands Ranch on June 17th.

At Chair Albee's request, Local President Dzengelewski stated with his election to president, it opened three seats on the board. Four candidates put their name in for election. Matt Sammond was elected as Vice Chair, Brent Chapman as Treasurer and Kinny Tasker as Secretary.

Correspondence items in the Board's packet are summarized below as well as other information items that were communicated:

- Director Hathaway reported that last week she attended a CPR class for the Blind sponsored by the Safety Foundation at Station 15.
- Director Anderson has received great feedback on how well Risk Reduction Specialist Einar Jensen did in the news recently regarding wildfire mitigation.
- Chief Adams reminded the Board that the 2022-01 Class graduates on June 16th at the Lone Tree Arts Center.
- Chair Albee stated that he will be out of town and unable to attend the June 25th LODD Annual Ceremony.

- The May Shift Performance KPI & Emergency Communications KPI were included in the board packet.
- A thank you letter was received from West Douglas County Fire Protection District for the overwhelming support given by SMFR in honoring the life of Fire Marshal Steve Smith.
- A letter of appreciation was received by Chief Baker for the South Metro Professional Firefighter's Foundation's donation to the family of Detective Malafronte.
- A thank you note was received by Chief Baker from Emergency Manager Intern Emily Madden expressing appreciation for the experience she gained at SMFR that she believes assisted in her getting her new job.
- A letter of appreciation was received from Community Risk Reduction Specialist Jensen for Recruit Firefighter Paul MacFarland's assistance with a First Aid Presentation at Bear Canyon Elementary School.
- A notice was received from the Littleton Police Department, who responded with SMFR to a house fire on May 20th where two people and two dogs were trapped in the basement, announcing that they had made an arrest in the arson case.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (UPON MOTION)

N/A

NEXT MEETING

The next Special South Metro Fire Rescue District Board of Directors' meeting will take place on June 20, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at 9195 East Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO.

The next Regular South Metro Fire Rescue District Board of Directors' meeting will take place on July 11, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at 9195 East Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Albee at 9:26 pm.

Attested by: 

Date: July 11, 2022