

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

West Metro Fire Protection District
Board of Directors Meeting
August 20, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the West Metro Fire Protection District board of directors was called to order by President Jerry Cassel at 6:00 p.m. This meeting was held in accordance with the applicable statutes of the state of Colorado, at West Metro Fire Protection District's Administrative Office Building, at 433 South Allison Parkway, Lakewood, Colorado, and available remotely via Teams.

II. ROLL CALL

President Jerry Cassel	Present
Vice President Bill Clayton	Present
Secretary Don Sherman	Present
Treasurer Carolyn Wolfrum	Absent
Director Mike Feeley	Present
Director Amira Watters	Present
Director Mike Williams	Present

Also present were Fire Chief Don Lombardi; Deputy Chief Mike Kirkpatrick; Deputy Chief Jeremy Metz; Deputy Chief Dan Pfannenstiel; Ms. Adele Reester, Esq.; Lieutenant Mike Mulcahy representing IAFF Local #1309; Mr. Bruk Mulaw; and, Ms. Jennifer Wheaton as recording secretary.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE

President Cassel led the Pledge of Allegiance and requested a moment of silence to honor all fallen firefighters.

IV. REVIEW OF MINUTES

MOTION: It was moved by Don Sherman and seconded by Mike Williams to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the board of directors dated July 16, 2024, as presented. The motion was voted upon and carried.

V. PROMOTIONS

A. Promote Edward Thompson to the Rank of Lieutenant, Effective August 2, 2024, – Fire Chief Don Lombardi

MOTION: It was moved by Amira Watters and seconded by Mike Feeley to promote Edward Thompson to the Rank of Lieutenant, Effective August 2, 2024. The motion was voted upon and carried.

VI. OATH OF OFFICE FOR LIEUTENANT EDWARD THOMPSON, AND FOR ENGINEER TYLER PRYTHERO

Tyler Prythero was officially promoted at the July 16, 2024 Board Meeting

VII. CITIZEN AWARDS

- A. Presentation of Citizen Award to Abel and Micah Alvarado – Fire Chief Don Lombardi
- B. Presentation of Citizen Award to Jefferson County Deputy Darren Ojard – Fire Chief Don Lombardi

RECESS

At approximately 6:22 p.m., President Cassel announced the board would take a 15-minute recess to congratulate the newly promoted employees and citizens, and would reconvene the regular meeting of the West Metro Fire Protection District Board of Directors at 6:37 p.m.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

IX. REPORTS

- A. Report of the Fire Chief – Fire Chief Don Lombardi
 - 1. USAR Update

The budget for the fiscal year October 1, 2024 - September 30, 2025, will remain unchanged at \$1.3 million. Looking ahead, CO-TF1 will receive a \$2 million budget for the fiscal year starting October 1, 2025.
 - 2. Insurance Services Office (ISO) Classification Process Update

Chief Lombardi updated the board on the progress of the ISO classification process. The District was recently made aware of some changes to the criteria that will need to be submitted to the ISO evaluators. This change was unexpected, and the staff coordinating the response have worked diligently to provide the new information as requested.
 - 3. Quarry Fire Update

Chief Lombardi remarked on the response to the Quarry Fire and the exceptional coordination and response by local agencies. The topography and terrain made the response extremely challenging for the firefighters. Chief Lombardi stated that while the fire was managed by the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office staff, West Metro, Inter-Canyon, and other

surrounding fire agencies, the fire met the criteria to be a Type I wildfire which would normally include national support. Reimbursement from the state resource system should come to the District for staffing hours at the fire, but doesn't cover the costs of equipment wear and tear, repairs, and backfill to cover normal operations. Chief Lombardi discussed concerns as a result of recent state legislative decisions and actions taken by Governor Polis to create instability in the funding for fire agencies in the state, making large-scale responses like these challenging from a financial perspective.

4. 2024 Camp Ember Presentation – Firefighter/Paramedic Lakota Beckhorn

Firefighter/Paramedic Lakota Beckhorn was present to provide the board with an update on this year's Camp Ember. 2024 marked the eighth year of Camp Ember when 16 girls aged 16-18 attended the four-day, three-night immersive fire-based camp. This mini fire academy begins with hose work, followed by auto extrication, the physical agility test, forceable entry, fire suppression, and a sensory deprivation simulation using bubbles in the Training Center tower. Over the course of the camp, the teens gain essential leadership skills, including confidence, focus, teamwork, service, strength, and courage. Days one and four occur at West Metro's Training Center, days two and three occur at the Arvada Training Center. Feedback about the program from the teens attending the camp and the parents of these teens has been terrific. The next gathering of Camp Ember alumni will be at this year's Family Fire Muster where campers from previous years will provide a car fire demonstration.

B. Finance – Finance Director Bruk Mulaw

1. June 2024 Financial Statements

Mr. Mulaw reviewed the June 2024 financial statements which will be brought to the board for approval at the September 17, 2024 meeting.

C. Administration – Deputy Chief Jeremy Metz

1. Administration Update

Chief Metz reported on the new employees onboarded in recent weeks in administration, including IT Administrator Levi Valdez, Data Analyst Jessica Roth, and Finance Administrative Assistant Kay Manint.

The health insurance premiums will be increasing by 7.5 % in 2025 for all employee plans. This increase is modest in comparison to other comparable organizations, some of which received increases over 10%. Chief Metz noted that while this is a significant increase, the District has been fortunate to have had minimal to no increases in healthcare premiums in recent years due to very low loss ratios.

The National Renewal Energy Laboratory (NREL) contract is coming to an end in September. The District is awaiting a response from NREL on the most recent contract proposal for the District to provide response services to the NREL campus for the next five years. This contract includes a \$1.4 million yearly increase for each year of the new contract in response to an increase in development on the campus.

2. Cybersecurity Update – IT Director Eric Bates

Mr. Bates provided the board with an annual update on the state of the District's cybersecurity, with a focus on the ongoing efforts his team takes to ensure the safety of the District's network. The presentation featured the process in place to prevent cyber threats such as phishing, smishing, software glitches and ransomware.

D. Operations – Deputy Chief Dan Pfannenstiel

1. Operations Update

In addition to the start of the recruit academy in early August, the Training Division has been busy facilitating officer-led drills, as well as preparing for the 2024 Lieutenant Promotional Exam. The EMS Division has been working on establishing a relationship for mental health response with law enforcement partners within Jefferson County. The EMS Division is also evaluating response strategies at some of the District's assisted care facilities with higher call volumes. Notable calls included recent successful responses since the implementation of a new automatic aid agreement with South Metro that has resulted in enhanced delivery services to both sides of each district.

E. Life Safety – Deputy Chief Mike Kirkpatrick

1. Comprehensive Project Report – Electronic Report

Chief Kirkpatrick commented on a recent fire that is still under investigation involving an electric vehicle. The car fire blanket was used as part of the response and the fire was successfully extinguished. The time on scene was lengthy as the crew spent time monitoring the car to ensure it did not reignite.

2. 29th Annual Family Fire Muster – September 21, 2024

New activities in 2024 include a lithium-ion battery presentation and a fun children's water-on-fire activity. Chief Kirkpatrick encouraged all to attend this family-centered community event.

3. Staffing

Chief Kirkpatrick welcomes Lieutenant Chad Stodden as the fire investigations team coordinator. Interviews will begin for a new life safety specialist next week.

F. Other Matters

Chief Lombardi inquired about any interest the board might have in an Accounting 101 presentation regarding an in-depth financial discussion as it relates to the District. This is something that has been made available to board members in the past, particularly when new members are getting started on the board. The board did not feel the need to have a special presentation, indicating that they are adequately acquainted with the District's finances at this time. Chief Lombardi offered that any member could request and receive more explanation at any time clarification or detail is needed regarding the District's finances.

G. Report of Legal Counsel – Adele Reester, Esq.

The 2024 SDA Conference will be held September 10-12, 2024 in Keystone, Colorado. Lyons Gaddis will be presenting at the conference again this year.

The legal staff has been reviewing the property purchase contract in preparation for tonight's presentation under old business for the potential property purchase at 7475 W. 5th Avenue, Lakewood, Colorado.

H. Report of the President – President Jerry Cassel

Mr. Cassel commented on the Washing-In ceremony that occurred at Station 16 earlier this month. He thanked Division Chief Jay Jackson for taking him and other Wheat Ridge Fire retirees on a station tour of the newly renovated Station 16. Additionally, Mr. Cassel thanked all those who attended and volunteered at the 55th Annual Carnation Festival. This is the 8th year that West Metro has participated in serving a spaghetti dinner to benefit the Colorado Professional Firefighters Foundation.

I. Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Carolyn Wolfrum

MOTION: It was moved by Mike Feeley and seconded by Don Sherman to approve the May 2024 Financial Statements as presented. The motion was voted upon and carried.

J. Report of the Union – Lieutenant Mike Mulcahy

Lieutenant Mulcahy reported on resolutions that the Local 1309 has been working on in recent weeks, opposing Colorado Ballot Initiatives 50 and 108.

- K. Report of Civil Service Committee – Secretary Don Sherman

Mr. Sherman reported on the August 13, 2024 Civil Service Committee meetings. The next meeting of the CSC is scheduled for September 10, 2024.

X. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Approval of the 2024 Accreditation Documents – Fire Chief Don Lombardi

MOTION: It was moved by Don Sherman and seconded by Mike Feeley to approve the 2024 Risk Assessment, and the 2024 Standard of Cover as presented. The motion was voted upon and carried.

- B. Property Purchase at 7475 W. 5th Avenue – Deputy Chief Jeremy Metz

MOTION: It was moved by Amira Watters and seconded by Mike Feeley to approve the real estate contract to purchase of 7475 W. 5th Avenue, Lakewood, CO 80226, for \$1,750,000 with Torres Mexican Food and authorize Chief Lombardi, or designee, to execute the real estate contract and all related documents and take necessary actions associated with the purchase of this property.

- C. Fire Chief Search Committee Update – Chairman Don Sherman and Bill Clayton

Mr. Sherman reviewed the timeline of activities associated with the fire chief search and selection process, including identifying important 2025 dates in which the board will be interviewing and prioritizing the finalist candidates.

Important dates include:

February 10, 2025 - Special Board Meeting - Full Board Interview Panel - Finalist Candidates in Public

February 18, 2025 - Regular Board Meeting (Early Start Time TBD) - Full Board Interview - Finalist Candidates in Executive Session

March 11, 2025 - Regular Board Meeting – Prioritization of Finalist Candidates in Executive Session - (Meeting date moved from March 18, 2025 to March 11, 2025)

The next meeting of the Fire Chief Search Committee will occur on October 15, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Ballot Initiatives 50 and 108 Discussion/Special Legislative Session – Fire Chief Don Lombardi

Chief Lombardi updated the board on Initiative 50 which addresses voter approval to retain additional property tax revenue over a 4% cap; and Initiative 108 which addresses property valuation for assessments by cutting assessment rates to 5.7% for residential properties, and 24% for non-residential properties. Both initiatives reduce funding for special districts, limiting the services the District would be able to provide to the citizens it serves; and in the long term, would impact insurance rates, apparatus, equipment, staffing, and would erode the District's reserves. To add complexity to the issue, Governor Polis has called a special session of the state legislature to further address property tax cuts in an attempt to head off ballot measures 50 and 108. Chief Lombardi noted that additional property tax cuts would destabilize revenues for special districts and cause considerable financial uncertainty in years to come. Chief Lombardi asked the board to consider their position on Initiatives 50 and 108 in preparation for a potential resolution to be approved at the September 17, 2024 board meeting. The need for a resolution will depend on the outcome of the special legislative session set to occur in late August 2024.

- B. Request the Top Three Names from the Eligibility Register for the Rank of Lieutenant from the Civil Service Committee – Fire Chief Don Lombardi

Chief Lombardi requested and received consensus to request the top three names from the eligibility register for the rank of lieutenant from the Civil Service Committee.

XII. BOARD BRIEFS

- A. Proposed Board Policy - Recording and Artificial Intelligence-Assisted Usage – Ms. Adele Reester

XIII. OTHER MATTERS

The 2022 District yearbooks have arrived and were provided to each board member.

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: There being no further business to be presented it was moved Bill Clayton and seconded by Mike Feeley to adjourn the regular meeting of the West Metro Fire Protection District board of directors. The motion was voted upon and carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

Recording Secretary: /s/s/ Jennifer Wheaton
/s/ Don Sherman