

Gunnison County Fire Protection District
Minutes
Regular Meeting
July 16, 2026

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Heath Smith. Meeting was held upstairs in the meeting room at the Fire House.

The following board members were present: Tom Stoeber, Scott Frazier, Heath Smith and Rob Hughes

City Accountant present: Ben Cowan

Board Secretary present: Deborah Ferchau

Chief present: Hugo Ferchau

Deputy Chief present: Tom McDonough

Captain present: Tyler Brown and Kenny Tomlin

Board Attorney: Not present

The following firemen were present: Joe Ricks – Assistant Chief.

Others: None.

II. Minutes:

The minutes from the June 18, 2026 regular meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Stoeber and seconded by Hughes to approve the June 18, 2026 regular minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Financial Report & Bills:

The financial report through June, 2026 was presented by Cowan. A motion was made by Stoeber and seconded by Fraser to approve the financial report and payment of the bills. Motion passed unanimously. Cowan advised that the audit will be completed by the deadline of July 31, 2026.

IV. Correspondence:

None.

V. Old Business::

- A. **Board Bylaws:** No news to report. H. Ferchau stated he can resend the draft to the Board.
- B. **Fire Station Education:** H. Ferchau comment that there is a public outreach meeting in Almont, July 20, 2026. H. Ferchau met with Neenan and has the number report, 30 years seems to be when the system starts paying for itself. H. Ferchau will send that report out the Board members. It was discovered that the water table is as close to the surface as 10 feet in some places so the basement no longer in the

plans. H. Ferchau talked to Dispatch briefly and they are excited about the possibility of having a space in the new fire station. H. Ferchau also talked with Neenan and the addition of Dispatch will cost a little more money.

VI. Fire Chief's Report:

- A. H. Ferchau advised the Board that calls have increased.
- B. H. Ferchau stated that all crews are back from dispatch but going out again Monday.
- C. H. Ferchau reported that Forest Service has areas around Lake City closed due to the Elk Creek fire.
- D. H. Ferchau reported that Gold Mountain fire is in Gunnison County now and they are working with the Incident Command structure for the fire. The crews did well responding to the helicopter crash at Silver Jack. There was a procession bringing the pilot into Gunnison and then again from Gunnison to Grand Junction and members of the GVFD helped to stand vigil while he was in the Gunnison morgue.

VII. Deputy Chief's Report:

- A. McDonough advised the Board that Chief 1 is back and good. The cost to the District will be around \$2,000 for deductible and added hood repair.
- B. McDonough commented that they are working well with Forest Service which is keeping Engine 619 busy. McDonough reported that Brown has been doing a phenomenal job with National Dispatch and especially at the Silver Jack evacuation.
- C. Brown talked about the last two brush fire starts, one in Powderhorn area and one in Sargents area that were detected by the MMA. Made some good connections with the Ute tribe. Brown, Larsen, James and Cohen will be on severity dispatch Monday, July 20, 2026 to August 2, 2026. H. Ferchau stated that the District will be providing lunches again like the last severity roll.

VIII. New Business:

None.

IX. Unscheduled Business:

- A. Smith suggested that now that Chief 1 is back in service can Ricks use the spare officers vehicle. McDonough said there has been conversations about that but have had some failures that have kept this vehicle busy. McDonough stated that it only makes sense to assign one of the Ford F150's to Ricks, he does so much and is every where with his personal vehicle. Hughes is on board. H. Ferchau state that he and Ricks have had the discussion and he can use it when ever. Ricks stated that he appreciates the offer. Ricks is concerned that as we are moving forward with a new fire house he is worried that driving around in a fire truck all time would possibly be sending a bad message but he would like to use it when needed. Smith stated the he doesn't think it is a bad look, using what we have not just buying new trucks for everyone, Chief should have a truck. McDonough stated that historically the benefits of using these trucks that have the needed tools on them make for a quicker response and hit and is only a benefit to the community. Stoeber staed that it is a waste to not use the truck and more of a negative look than an officer using it. Fraser agreed that it is a good image to have the vehicle out being used in view of the public. Board consensus is for the truck to be used by Ricks, etc. Stoeber asked if it needs anything. McDonough stated that they have enough to put it back in service, may need an AED.

- B. H. Ferchau stated that the Board may see the Dispatch line item is being used for needed equipment on 619 like Starlink. Ricks stated that the Starlink roam device was a huge asset at the Silver Jack incident.
- C. Stoeber thanked H. Ferchau for the line he towed regarding the fireworks, he took a beat down. Stoeber also thanked the fire department for their support of community events. H. Ferchau advised the Board that they had zero firework issues after the show.

X. Adjourn:

A motion was made by Stoeber and seconded by Hughes to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.