



DEER MOUNTAIN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

6181 COUNTY ROAD 28 - COTOPAXI, CO 81223
March 18, 2026 at 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: Miriam Andolini called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

PRAYER: Laurie McKay

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Miriam Andolini

ROLL CALL: Anita Gregg, Recording Secretary

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Miriam Andolini, Laurie McKay, Nancy Mickelson, JR Niblett and Forrest Nichols
A quorum of the Board was noted.

PUBLIC INPUT SIGN UP: M. Andolini directed community members in attendance to sign up if they would like to comment.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Motion** by M. Andolini to approve the minutes of the February 21, 2026 Regular Board Meeting. Second by L. McKay. Discussion: None. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.

David Flaherty, CEO of Magellan Strategies (in attendance electronically) provided an overview of his business services proposal. Their service would both educate and ask the Deer Mountain community clarifying survey questions to best direct the actions of the Board in the future. The written Proposal of Public Opinion Research Services costing \$6,500 was provided and reviewed. There would be an "all of the above" approach to acquiring data with an expected return of 150 to 300 respondents. A certified list of voters would be compiled and provided to the Board. - *supporting documentation*

- **TREASURER'S REPORT:** Nancy Mickelson - *supporting documentation*

February Treasurer's Report:

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Month deposits | \$ 135,823.58 |
| Expenses to date | \$ 27,888.52 |
| Total checking account funds | \$ 75,576.55 |
| Total funds available – including reserves (2/28/2026) | \$ 712,506.35 |

Bills Paid Report:

Bills paid through March 18, 2026 \$ 40,677.33

Motion by N. Mickelson to approve the Treasurer's Report and the Bills Paid Report. Second by JR Niblett. Discussion: Bills to be paid were higher than normal due to quarterly payments. Check #7580 is duplicated and will be corrected.

Wildland expense check to Thorne Holdings covered accommodation expenses for those coming in from out of the area to deploy on a wildland fire. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.

- **Hall Rental Agreement**
Motion by L. McKay to modify the rental agreement to indicate a four-hour minimum rental for events and a two-hour minimum rental for meetings. Second by N. Mickelson. Discussion: The hourly rate of \$15/hour will remain, and the facilities should be left as they were found. The finalized agreement will be made available to Ginger Delker and Marcus Widener. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.
- **Credit card pay link - *supporting documentation***
Discussion in reference to providing community members with the ability to pay an invoice online. This will assist in more effective collections. Any transaction fees would be passed on to the consumer for this convenience. **Motion** by N. Mickelson to pursue the implementation of a payment link on our website through SIPA and Streamline. Second by M. Andolini. Discussion: Nothing further. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.
- **Banking issues –** The Bank of the San Juans is a smaller institution open only from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday. This was not convenient when the line-of-credit on credit cards needed to be increased. There is now a \$10,000/month limit so that cards can be used more effectively. The Engine Debit Account has been renamed the Wildland Account. Debit cards for the Wildland Account can be used as a backup payment option for those deployed to a fire.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Miriam Andolini

- **Magellan Strategies Survey Proposal – **Motion**** by M. Andolini to hire David Flaherty of Magellan Strategies to provide public opinion survey services for DMFPD at a cost of \$6,500. Second by JR Niblett. Discussion: After three failed mil levy increase ballot initiatives, Magellan Strategies can provide the comprehensive assistance needed and has indicated that the next ballot initiative is winnable. Also, there was a discussion on the challenges of volunteers. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.

- Grant updates – There has been no word yet on any grant awards. The FEMA Grant is not yet open.
- 2026 Service Plan – The plan is a work in progress.
- Performance review – Per the employment contract with Fire Chief Marcus Widener, a six-month review will be scheduled for an Executive Session in April. ACTION ITEM for M. Andolini to compile the review form and to define the process.

VICE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: JR Niblett

- Building A update – An office wall will need to be moved so that the restroom is ADA compliant.
- Ambulance prices – **Motion** by JR Niblett to add a separate \$1 per mile fuel surcharge for round-trip ambulance service. Second by F. Nichols. Discussion: The price of diesel fuel continues to increase. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried. ACTION ITEM for M. Widener to contact the billing service to add this additional charge.
- Wildland Services – Wildland truck readiness is essential. Crews cannot serve unless, when checked, all requirements are met. **Motion** by JR Niblett to purchase 8 fire shelters for use on wildland trucks at a cost of \$600 each. Second by M. Andolini. Discussion: The safety of fire fighters is a priority. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried. ACTION ITEM for M. Widener to check on the expiration dates on all equipment.

ASSISTANT TREASURER'S REPORT: Laurie McKay

- CSLIP – The Centennial State Liquid Investment Pool was not funded as previously determined. Recently, the Bank of the San Juans offered new information to the benefit of the District. After extensive discussion, the Board determined a new financial direction. **Motion** by L. McKay to investigate conversion of both the Emergency Reserves (\$304,434) and the Capital Improvement (\$324,839) accounts into two separate interest-earning money market accounts. Second by M. Andolini. Discussion: Nothing further. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.
- Wildland update – A pre-deployment contract was compiled by department leadership. The new contract outlines specific pay/wage details, advanced pay, bonus structure information, accommodation authorization, meal per diem information etc. and must be signed by all those deploying to a wildland fire with DMFD. **Motion** by L. McKay for the DMFPD attorney to review the labor laws with respect to wildland payroll. Second by M. Andolini. Discussion: Nothing further. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried. - *supporting documentation*
For clarity, the Engine Debit Account has been renamed the Wildland Account so that all revenue and expenses are in and out of the same account. Moving \$50,000 from the checking account into the Wildland Account to cover upcoming expenses from the recent wildland fire deployment was recommended.
- Ground maintenance – There was only one bid/proposal. This expense is covered by the budget for both Station 1 and Station 2. An insurance release will need to be signed. **Motion** by L. McKay to hire Chris Hugi to perform grounds maintenance from May to October 2026, at a cost of \$2,700 to be paid in increments. Second by M. Andolini. Discussion: Nothing further. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried - *supporting documentation*

COMMUNICATION/CONSTRUCTION: Forrest Nichols

- Mascot – DMFD will introduce a new mascot. A contest will be held to name it.
- Volunteers – Still seeking the needed volunteers.
- Building A – Will be working with JR Niblett on the office/bathroom construction project.

Additional comments: The Magellan survey will provide good information. The written social media policy is still a work in progress and will be mindful of personal accountability, will prohibit HIPPA violations and avoid copyright infringement. The meeting is being filmed at no cost for posting to YouTube.com. The primary source of communication is through email to Board@dmfpd.org.

PUBLIC INPUT: None

STATION REPORTS: Fire Chief Marcus Widener

- Reimbursements – A submission presented to the Treasurer for a purchase reimburse.
- Fire/EMS/Training/Runs – This month, there have been 13 calls - three fires and ten medical runs. Mutual aid provided for Custer County and Wet Mountain on four medical runs and one fire call. There have been 65 total calls for the year.
- Personnel Hiring – There have been no new hires.
- Additional comments:
 - The truck in Texas has been extended until April 5. A potential crew swap after that time with a new resource order.
 - The State Lease Engine may be delivered by the end of the month or early April. Possibility of two trucks listed and out on wildland fires in the future.
 - The new DMFD fire truck is in production with late November or early December delivery timeframe. Working with the Cotopaxi principal on the truck build as a real-life STEM project example for students.

- Area cisterns are being checked and filled.
- Called out on mutual aid to the local wildland fire on Verdemont Road.
- Staff is working hard on inventory and equipment repairs/maintenance.
- Fire extinguishers check this Friday, March 20 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM.
- Fire mitigation/urban interface information will be provided via Facebook. The Upper Arkansas Forest Health Association Team may be available to provide mitigation services for public areas such roadways and right-of-ways.
- Additionally, *Ready, Set, Go!* information will be posted on Facebook when provided.
- *Everbridge Emergency Notification* information provided for the website and Facebook. - *supporting documentation*

OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Miriam Andolini

- The next monthly Board Meeting is on April 15, 2026 at 6:00 PM.
- DMFS Events Updates provided by Ginger Delker
 - March 20 – Fire extinguisher check
 - March 28 – Training meal for volunteers
 - April 25 – Plant & Craft Sale
 - May 30 – Open House
 - June 30 – Last Saturday of the month Garage Sales begin

VOTE TO ADJOURN: JR Niblett

- **Motion** by M. Andolini to adjourn the meeting. Second by N. Mickelson. Discussion: None. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Anita Gregg

Supporting documentation:
Proposal of Public Opinion Research Services
Profit & Loss Budget Performance
Bills Paid Report
Credit Card payment services documents
Pre-deployment wildland contract
Grounds Maintenance pricing
Sign in Sheet
Everbridge business card