



# DEER MOUNTAIN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

## REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

6181 COUNTY ROAD 28 - COTOPAXI, CO 81223  
April 15, 2026 at 6:00 PM

**CALL TO ORDER:** Miriam Andolini called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

**PRAYER:** Laurie McKay

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Miriam Andolini

**ROLL CALL:** Anita Gregg, Recording Secretary

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Miriam Andolini, Laurie McKay, JR Niblett and Forrest Nichols

DIRECTOR ABSENT: Nancy Mickelson

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 March 18, 2026 Regular Board Meeting. Second by JR Niblett. Discussion: Minutes are posted to the website after approval. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.

- **TREASURER'S REPORT:** Laurie McKay - *supporting documentation*

March Treasurer's Report:

Month deposits	\$ 14,240.27
Expenses to date	\$ 74,204.46
Total checking account funds	\$ 75,576.62
Emergency Reserves	\$ 504,434.75
Capital Improvements	\$ 124,839.27
Engine Debit Account	\$ 7,655.78
Total funds available – including reserves (3/31/2026)	\$ 762,520.42

**Motion** by L. McKay to accept the Treasurer's Report. Second by M. Andolini. Discussion: None. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried

Bills Paid Report:

Bills paid through April 15, 2026 \$ 70,587.54

**Motion** by L. McKay to approve the Bills Paid Report. Second by M. Andolini. Discussion: Wildland expenses were \$44,426.21 (those funds will come back) and regular station expenses were \$26,161.33. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.

**ASSISTANT TREASURER'S REPORT:** Laurie McKay - *supporting documentation*

- CSLIP and reserve bank accounts clarifications were reviewed. ACTION ITEM for L. McKay to determine required TABOR reserve amounts. **Motion** by L. McKay to not transfer \$400,000 into CSLIP. The account will remain open with funds. Second by M. Andolini. Discussion: Nothing further. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.
- The new accountant has taken corrective action on several accounting issues. The benefits of the accountant and fees paid were reviewed. **Motion** by L. McKay that since the six-month probationary period is over, the monthly fee paid to the accountant increase to \$800 as was paid in the past. Second by JR Niblett. Discussion: Nothing further. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.
- Wildland payroll – The attorney advised that payroll wages must be earned, vested and determinable. The current practice of paying 80% of wages ahead of the State of Colorado confirmation is a good faith advance on funds owed and should not change.
- Participation in FPPA (Fire and Police Pension Association) – The requirement for DMFPD to enroll the Fire Chief and Assistant Chief in FPPA of Colorado was discussed. There is an 11% employer contribution and an additional 4% for death and disability coverage beginning in May 2026. ACTION ITEM for L. McKay to inquire with FPPA about the eligibility for years of service credit for prior firefighting employment by Fire Chief Widener.  
**Motion** by L. McKay the District to cover the 4% contribution for death and disability coverage. Second by F. Nichols. Discussion: Nothing further. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.
- Cotopaxi Fire Station - *supporting documentation*  
Bill Delker researched documents with Fremont County. There is a 40-year lease agreement that states that the land is owned by Fremont County. The buildings are owned by DMFPD. The lease expires in 2029. The lease will be re-negotiated. Many volunteers are cleaning up the property.
- Storage building at Cotopaxi Fire Station - **Motion** by L. McKay to remove a small, empty, infested storage shed. Second by JR Niblett. Discussion: Suggested that DMFD Auxiliary could purchase a picnic table for this location. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.
- A revised Community Hall Rental Agreement was reviewed and discussed. ACTION ITEMS for M. Andolini to investigate donations, required signatures, and alcohol on the premises. Vote to approve the agreement was tabled.
- Forms - The insurance company provided required Release Forms for volunteers and independent contractors. Forms available from the Fire Chief.

- Businesses provide their own Certificate of Insurance when hired by the District.
- Water - The water at Station 1 has been tested. Drinking water is hard water, but it is safe.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Miriam Andolini

- Grant application updates
  - FEMA - The application process is not open for the AFG. The DMFPD application is ready. We could use the same grant writer to apply for the SAFER Grant which opens at a different timeframe from AFG or apply ourselves.
  - Firefighter Safety Disease and Prevention - This \$20,000 grant for wildland gear has been denied. The Fire Chief will compile an alternative plan.

**VICE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** JR Niblett - *supporting documentation*

- Office and bathroom projects discussed. Building materials to be delivered this week. The scope of the plumbing contract will include: a bathroom, washer/dryer hook-up, hot-water heater, and water filtration system.  
**Motion** by JR Niblett to accept the bid from White Bros. Custom Plumbing & Heating at \$9,629.44. Second by L. McKay  
 Discussion: Other bids were sought, but no others were submitted. Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.

**COMMUNICATION/CONSTRUCTION:** Forrest Nichols - *supporting documentation*

- A detailed, credible and lawful Social Media Policy was presented for discussion. The vote for approval was tabled. ACTION ITEM for M. Andolini will research records retention policy.
- Burn Restrictions - Fire Chief Widener wrote a letter to the Fremont County Sheriff in reference to current burn restrictions. DMFD can always be more restrictive. Currently there is a Burn Ban with no open fires of any kind. DMFPD signs in disrepair will be re-painted. ACTION ITEM for M. Andolini to notify property listing agencies on fire restrictions. The Fire Chief suggested roadside signs stating, "Absolutely No Burning" or "Fires = Fines" along District roads.

**STATION REPORTS:** Fire Chief Marcus Widener

- Fremont County Burn Permits - Met with the FC Undersheriff and burn permit information was provided.
- The County Sheriff's Office can and will issue and enforce illegal burning citations. Upon responding to an illegal burn, the Sheriff will be called, pictures taken, documentation gathered, and citations issued. First offense is a \$275 fine and the second \$425 and eventual jail time for frequent offenders. No leniency will be given.
- Fire/EMS/Training/Runs - A total of 103 calls this year. This month, 86 hrs. of training included digging fire lines, laying wet lines, water shuttling, and cistern checking.
- Wildland Update - The crew has returned from being out for six weeks. Truck, tender and crew are listed again. DMFD is working cooperatively and collaboratively with other departments.
- Personnel: One firefighter resigned, and another stepped up to volunteer. Still looking for local EMTs.
- Six backpacks were purchased and assembled to hold essential shelters, food, and water. This pack must always be carried. All DM staff should be dressed appropriately and professionally when reporting.

**OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Chief Widener

- A fuel surcharge cannot be billed. The mileage rate can be raised to recover the increased cost of diesel. However, Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement rates will not change. DMFD volunteers responding are challenged by the increase in fuel costs. Consideration of fuel gift cards could be provided to volunteer staff to say thank you. Gift card (approx. 20) purchases will be tabled until the next meeting.

**PUBLIC INPUT:**

- Ginger Delker inquired on the swing set behind Station 1 and how it affects DMFPD liability insurance. Suggested it be removed because it is not used.  
 UPDATES on events: Inquired if Forrest Nichols could produce signs (such as "No Burning") for events - Workday coming up at Station 2 - Plant Sale next Saturday with 30 vendors - Open House next month on May 30 - Reflective address signs fundraiser coming soon. The cost of a sign is \$25.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Miriam Andolini

- Monthly Board Meeting on May 21, 2026 at 6:00 PM.

***At 7:38 PM, the Board Chairman moved to Executive Session pursuant to §24-6-402(4)(F), C.R.S. for discussion of a Fire Department human resource matter, the six-month performance review of Chief Widener.***

The regular Board meeting resumed at 8:06 PM.

**VOTE TO ADJOURN:** Miriam Andolini

- **Motion** by M. Andolini to adjourn the meeting. Second by JR Niblett. Discussion: None.  
 Vote: Unanimous; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Anita Gregg

<p><b><i>Supporting documentation:</i></b>  <i>Profit &amp; Loss Budget Performance</i>  <i>Bills Paid Report</i>  <i>Cotopaxi Fire Station Lease</i>  <i>Community Hall Rental Agreement</i>  <i>White Bros Custom Plumbing &amp; Heating Contract</i>  <i>Social Media Policy</i>  <i>Fire Chief Widener Letter</i></p>
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