

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): 2026 DMFPD Ballot Issue 6A

1. Who is eligible to vote, and how can residents participate in the election?

Under Colorado law, an eligible elector in a special district election must be registered to vote in Colorado and must meet at least one of the following qualifications:

- Be a resident of the special district; or
- Own taxable real or personal property within the boundaries of the special district, regardless of whether the voter resides within the district; or
- Be the spouse or civil union partner of a person who owns taxable real or personal property within the district.
- A person who is obligated to pay property taxes under a contract to purchase taxable property within the district may also qualify as an owner for purposes of voter eligibility.

These eligibility requirements are established by **C.R.S. §§ 32-1-103(5)** and **32-1-806**.

Check Your Voter Registration

Before the election, voters are encouraged to verify that their voter registration information is current and accurate.

Visit the Colorado Secretary of State's voter registration website at [GoVoteColorado.gov](https://www.GoVoteColorado.gov). → "Find My Registration."

- Check your voter registration status
- Confirm or update your address
- Review your voter information
- Register to vote or update your registration

Didn't Receive a Ballot or Recently Update Your Registration?

If you do not receive your ballot, or if you updated or changed your voter registration information on or after **September 15, 2026**, please contact the Designated Election Official (DEO) as soon as possible to ensure your information is correct and determine the appropriate next steps for voting in the District's election.

Please do not wait until Election Day to address ballot or registration questions.

The **Designated Election Official** (DEO) for the election is **Matthew Taylor**, contact information listed below.

Bailey & Peterson, P.C.

7991 Shaffer Parkway, Suite 101, Littleton, CO 80127

Phone: (303) 837-1660

Email: taylor@b-p-law.com

2. What is Ballot Issue 6A, and what is being asked of voters?

Ballot Issue 6A asks registered voters and property owners within the Deer Mountain Fire Protection District (DMFPD) whether District property taxes should be increased by **\$361,851 in 2026 for collection in fiscal year 2027**, and annually thereafter by whatever additional amounts are raised, through an additional property tax mill levy of **not more than 6.9 mills**.

The official ballot text specifies that revenue proceeds will be used for general and capital fund purposes, including:

- **Maintaining volunteer recruitment** and increasing firefighter and EMT availability levels
- **Funding fire suppression and Emergency Medical Services (EMS)** provided by the District
- **Funding the replacement of the aging apparatus fleet** through a phased replacement pathway
- **Authorizing the District to collect, retain, and spend all proceeds and investment earnings** as a voter-approved revenue change under Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution (TABOR)

3. When was the last time DMFPD increased its property tax mill levy rate?

The District's property tax mill levy rate has not been increased since 2011. In 2013, the District added Emergency Medical Services (EMS), including ambulance transport, without an increase in taxpayer funding. The District has continued providing both fire and EMS services at the same tax rate established in 2011.

4. How much will the proposed tax increase cost property owners?

If approved, Ballot Issue 6A authorizes an additional property tax levy of 6.9 mills, raising an estimated \$361,851 in 2026 for collection in fiscal year 2027.

- **Residential Property Estimated Impact:** Residential increase will be calculated at \$47.78 per \$100,000 in actual value
- **Non-Residential Property Estimated Impact:** Non-residential increase will be calculated at \$172.50 per \$100,000 in actual value
- **Tax Rate Context:** The District's property tax mill levy rate has not increased since 2011. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) were added to the District in 2013 with no additional funding and have been maintained under the current tax rate.

**The numbers shown above are for 2027 illustrative purposes only and cannot be relied upon to reflect with any certainty the amount of the tax imposed in future years. If you have questions regarding your specific tax implications, please reach out to the Fremont County Assessor's Office.*

5. Why is the District requesting an increase in tax revenue again?

The District faces a structural gap between recurring operating revenues and recurring operating expenses:

- **Recurring Revenue vs. Expenses:** In the 2026 budget, recurring revenue totals \$418,220 (\$373,220 in property taxes + \$45,000 in net medical ambulance billing). Core operational expenses are budgeted at \$646,400, leaving an annual operational deficit of \$228,180.
- **Reserve Transfers:** The District's 2026 budget includes a planned transfer of \$204,000 from reserves to maintain operational continuity (\$54,000) and for allocations of one-time expenditures (\$150,000) outlined below. This action was explicitly intended as a temporary bridging strategy while the District advances toward either (a) sustainable revenue through a Mill Levy increase or (b) a corresponding reduction in service levels to align with available funding. Separate from operational reserve use, the District has also allocated capital reserves for one-time expenditures, including \$100,000 for a down payment and payments on a new fire apparatus and \$50,000

for necessary repairs on Building A of Station One. These capital investments are consistent with long-term asset management and infrastructure needs and are distinct from operational funding requirements.

- **Increasing Demand:** In 2025, the District responded to 306 emergency calls, with medical emergencies accounting for 63% of all responses. Call volume has consistently increased by approximately 20% year over year and is trending even higher in 2026.
- **Aging Fleet:** The average age of the District's fire apparatus is 34.5 years, compared to the 20-year frontline replacement benchmark recommended by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

6. How will the additional revenue be spent?

Proceeds from Ballot Issue 6A are designated for general operations and capital fund uses to support firefighter/EMT staffing availability, volunteer recruitment, fire/EMS operations, and fleet replacement. Legal counsel and District planning documents outline several reasons why funds are structure-wide rather than restricted solely to an isolated EMS fund.

- **Statutory Authority:** Under Title 32 of the Colorado Revised Statutes (§ 32-1-1002), fire protection districts are authorized to operate EMS, ambulance transport, and rescue units as integrated core duties of the district.
- **Avoiding Administrative Duplication:** Creating a separate, restricted EMS entity would require duplicate accounting systems, independent audits, separate financial oversight, and additional administrative overhead, diverting funds away from frontline emergency services.
- **Shared Operational Resources:** Firefighters, EMTs, stations, fuel, and emergency vehicles serve dual roles across both fire and medical calls, making combined general/capital fund accounting more cost-effective.

7. What changes if Ballot Issue 6A is approved by voters?

- **Taxing Authority & Revenue:** The District receives statutory authority to levy an additional property tax of 6.9 mills, generating an estimated \$361,851 in fiscal year 2027.
- **TABOR Retention:** All tax revenues and investment earnings generated by the levy are retained and spent without statutory TABOR revenue caps.
- **Operational Capabilities:** Revenue will be used to eliminate reliance on emergency reserves for daily operational expenses, expand paid EMT/firefighter staffing availability alongside volunteers, fund phased apparatus replacement, and expand response readiness across the 236 square miles we serve.

8. What happens if Ballot Issue 6A is not approved?

- **Taxing Authority & Revenue:** The proposed tax increase of up to 6.9 mills will not be levied, and the additional \$361,851 in annual revenue will not be collected.
- **Financial Structure:** The District continues operating under its existing recurring tax revenue base of 6.927000 mills, currently \$373,220.12 for the fiscal year 2026.
- **Service Level Alignment:** Because reserve transfers serve only as a temporary 2026 bridging strategy, the adopted Service Plan establishes that operational expenditures and service levels will be adjusted downward to align with available recurring revenues.

9. Why didn't the District discontinue ambulance service at the beginning of the year?

The State of Colorado changed its process for discontinuing ambulance service. Under the current requirements, the District would need to sell the ambulances and repay the grant funding used to acquire them. Because the previous ballot measure failed by only five votes, the Board determined that voters should have another opportunity to consider

the funding question before the District takes steps that could result in the loss or reduction of its ambulance transport capabilities.

10. When will the District's 2027 budget be available, and how can I participate?

The District's 2027 proposed budget will be presented to the Board no later than October 15, 2026. Once submitted, the proposed budget will be available for public inspection and notice of the public budget hearing will be published.

Residents are encouraged to participate in the budget process. Interested electors may review the proposed budget, attend the public budget hearing, provide comments, and submit objections or recommendations before the budget is formally adopted. The Board may revise the proposed budget based on anticipated revenues, District needs, and input received during the budget process.

The final 2027 budget will be adopted by the Board following the required public budget process and will be made available to the public after adoption.