Aspen Fire Protection District

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Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes
June 9th, 2026

The Board of Directors of the Aspen Fire Protection District met for their regular meeting. The meeting was open to the public in person and virtually via Zoom.

Meeting called to order by Dave Walbert at 5:01pm.

Roll Call:

- Board of Directors Present: Dave "Wabs" Walbert, Charles Cunniffe, Jennifer Goldfarb, Emily Taylor, Parker Lathrop
- Staff/Volunteers Present: Jake Andersen, Nikki Lapin, Jan Legersky, Jan Schubert, Eliza Robison
- Public/Others: Aaron Bern (legal council)

MOTION: **Motion made by Jennifer Goldfarb to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting on June 9th 2026**
Second: Charles Cunniffe
Discussion: None
Vote: Pass

Public Comment: None.

AVFD Inc.: None.

Financials – Provided in the board packet

- Volunteer health benefits costs were discussed, misprint in financials.
- Stations buildings and grounds: Aspen Village improvements are higher than projected. Jake and Jan will review.

Board member comments/action items:

Charles Cunniffee stated that he needs to leave the meeting before 6:30

Under current stage 2 fire restrictions, the only grills that are allowed are those with turn on and off valves.

Staff Report:

Staff reports were reviewed as provided in the board packet. Highlights included:

Fire Marshal Report - Reviewed by Fire Marshal Jan Legersky

- Issued over 16 hot works permits, all require site visit.
- Rule of thumb: if you need water or fire extinguisher to put it out, it should not be happening.
- Zach and Ben participated in wildfire training and investigation methodology. Later that week, they were called for mutual aid for investigations in South Canyon.
- Continuous conversations about fire suppression systems. The main concern is that it can't be hooked up to any type of city water system.
- Show and Tell: new museum item

Operations Report - Reviewed by Chief Anderson and Deputy Chief Fisher

The Woody Creek Incident was discussed. The incident highlighted the importance of having multiple layers of fire detection and a rapid response. The first person to report the fire was a volunteer firefighter, followed shortly afterward by an alert from the PANO AI detection system**.** Our personnel were among the first on scene and were able to respond incredibly quickly. We were fortunate that the fire was contained within the racetrack area and that wind conditions were relatively favorable at the time. The rapid, coordinated response among our personnel and partner agencies was critical to keeping the incident from becoming much more serious.

Currently, there are no additional fire-specific regulations for racetracks**,** which makes continued coordination, preparedness, and collaboration with these facilities particularly important.

Drone Program

- FAA approvals are underway for the Seneca drones. Once approvals are complete, training will begin in coordination with local partners and private landowners who have agreed to allow the department to conduct drone operations over their property.
- Currently, 15 members are enrolled in drone certification training, which is required by the FAA.

Housing

- Closing on the Midland housing units is anticipated during the third week of July.
- The new Pacific Avenue apartment will be occupied by a career firefighter.

Training & Human Performance

- A new Human Performance Optimization position will be housed within the Training Division.
- The Training Division will focus on three primary areas:
    - Technical skills and operational training
    - Wellness and human performance
    - Higher learning and professional development for administrative staff
- The Certified Public Manager course through the University of Denver (DU) is being offered valley-wide for interested staff.

Cybersecurity & Technology

- Following a recent cybersecurity scare, the department was able to respond quickly and effectively. Administrative staff have also completed cybersecurity training to strengthen preparedness and awareness.
- Claude CoWork AI is being introduced as a tool to improve administrative workflows and efficiency.
- Expensify is being introduced to streamline the tracking and management of credit card expenses.

Operations & Standardization

- The Volunteer Representatives (VRs) are working to establish greater standardization across all truck team meetings. This has been identified as a high-value initiative for improving consistency, communication, and organizational alignment.
- The department is also working to define volunteer standards and a clear pathway for volunteer firefighters, including expectations and opportunities for development.

Fire & Technical Training

- Hose Evolutions: Members continue to learn and practice new hose-handling techniques. This remains an outstanding and highly valuable training area.
- Technical Rope Rescue: Rope rescue training occurred, providing members with hands-on experience and reinforcing technical rescue capabilities.
- Propane Training: Propane-specific training was not conducted this month and is scheduled for November.
- Wildland Training: The Wildland Team continues to prepare for the season, including recent chainsaw training to strengthen operational readiness.

EMS Training

- Heat & Dehydration: EMT training addressed the recognition, prevention, and treatment of heat-related illness and dehydration. Members focused on shock, including recognition and appropriate treatment considerations.

Volunteer Training Requirements

- Volunteers are required to complete a minimum of 36 training hours per year.
- Training hours encompass a combination of:
    - Medical/EMS training
    - Technical rescue
    - Fire training

Recruitment & Academy Progress

- Class of 2026: All members successfully completed and passed their firefighter training. Approximately one-third are currently completing their medical training, with Red Card/wildland qualification training scheduled for this fall.
- Class of 2027: Recruitment is underway, with 45 applicants received to date. The applicant pool will be narrowed to approximately 13 candidates, with an anticipated 8–9 candidates committing to the academy.

Wildfire Mitigation and Preparedness - Information provided by Andy Fisher on behalf of Ali Hager

- More than half of the wildfire home mitigation assessments have been completed.
- Starting on Monday, over 20 people saw crew be starting on shadow mountain assessments.
- Working with city and country to prioritize their lands such as HOA's and other public spaces.

Human Resources Report - Reviewed by Human Resources Director Nikki Lapin

- Moving forward with volunteer recruiting meeting on 7/21
- Division Chief of Training and Training Lieutenant to launch towards the end of July

- Fire Prevention Division will be hiring an additional fire prevention employee in the fall.
- Salery schedule in progress.

CEO / Fire Chief Report - Presented by Fire Chief Jake Andersen

Thank you to our community and partners for a safe, enjoyable and successful 4th of July. Incident management team was established, with no major events. No water was sprayed to observe the current water restrictions.

Sales Tax Revenue

- Sales tax collections continue to exceed our internal predictions. Months that were predicted to be lower are still double what was originally projected. Overall satisfied with current projections.
- Airport closure in 2027 will most likely impact our sales tax collection efforts.
- Property tax % has increased from 6.1 to 6.8%

Wildland Mitigation Update

- Proposal to City and County partners to collaborate on wildfire mitigation and moving quickly on projects
- Looking into public owned lands that include housing, roadways and valleys.
- The 20 person chain saw crew will be working on prescribed wildland mitigation reduction. Crew will be following current restrictions. Consider adding Wrights Road to the mitigation list

Upcoming Events

- Foundation fundraising activities
    - Mayor's Cup charitable golf tournament benefiting wildfire preparedness initiatives - August 9th
    - AWF Embers and Elegance Annual Fund Raiser – August 14th

The pace of work has been substantial, we recognize that. Our folks are doing incredible things. Proud of our partners as well.

Old Business None

New Business None

MOTION: Motion made by Charles to adjourn.
Second: Jennifer Goldfarb
Discussion: None
Vote: All approved

Adjourned at 6:18 pm

***** A board packet of this meeting can be requested by contacting the Executive Administrative Assistant at eliza.robison@aspenfire.com or by calling 970-925-5532.**