RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Meeting Minutes of the Estes Valley Fire Protection District
July 27, 2026, 4:30 pm
Dannels Fire Station, 901 N. St. Vrain Ave., Estes Park, CO 80517

Board: Sandra Smith, Scott Dorman, Ryan Leahy, Jon Smith

Absent: Jeff Robbins

Staff: Chief Kevin Nunn, Warren Jones, Division Chief Justin Kearney, Division Chief Jon Landkamer, Marinda Baxter, Rebecca Gelsinger, Sara Barden, Logan Lasley

Also Attending: Dot Dorman, Michael Barnthouse, Diana Ver Der Ploeg, Nathan Meulener, Patti Brown, Rick Spear, Steve Dazzio, Ashley Hernandez-Schlagel, Steven Rodriguez, Marianne Baxter, Nola Greenwald, Mike Sweezy, Randy and Elizabeth Repola

Sandra Smith called the regularly scheduled board meeting to order at 4:29 pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Moved by Scott Dorman and seconded by Ryan Leahy to approve the agenda.
Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT
None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Moved by Ryan Leahy and seconded by Jon Smith to approve the meeting minutes from June 22, 29, and July 14 meetings.
Motion carried unanimously.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Election Update
Ashley Hernandez-Schlagel provided an overview of the resolution, calling for a November 3, 2026, special election and appointing a Designated Election Official (DEO). The Board discussed the resolution and clarified that the specific sales tax amount and percentage would be addressed in the ballot language and are not required to be included in this initial resolution. President, Sandi Smith, made a minor amendment to the resolution title to include the resolution number, 2026-07.

Moved by Jon Smith and seconded by Ryan Leahy to adopt resolution 2026.07, a resolution calling for a November 3, 2026, special election, and appointing a designated election official.
Motion carried unanimously.

HB24B-1001 Property Tax Growth Limit
Ashley Hernandez-Schlagel provided an overview of HB24B-101 and explained that the legislation establishes a 5.25% limit on property tax revenue growth unless voters approve a waiver of the limit. She advised that the District could consider placing a voter-approved waiver question on the November 2026 ballot. The ballot language is largely prescribed by statute and would have less flexibility than the proposed sales tax ballot question.

The Board discussed potential concerns with placing both the sales tax measure and property tax revenue growth limit waiver on the same ballot, including the possibility that having two questions could affect voter perception or dilute support for either measure. Ashley noted that the two questions could be structured with the sales tax question appearing first and clarified that the property tax waiver would remove the revenue growth cap rather than directly increase taxes. Board members requested additional information regarding the legislation, the potential implications for the District, and the legal considerations associated with placing the waiver question on the ballot. Ashley offered to provide the Board with her initial legal analysis for further review.

No action was taken. The Board agreed to table the matter for further discussion, potentially through a work session or executive session, before deciding on whether to pursue the property tax revenue growth limit waiver.

Financial Matters

2025 Audit

The Board received a presentation on the District's 2025 audit from Steve Dazzio. Steve Dazzio reported that the District's 2025 financial statements received an unqualified opinion, indicating no material issues were identified in the audit.

The Board also discussed a disclosure in the audit concerning expenditures in excess of appropriation in the Volunteer Pension Fund. The auditor explained that the amount resulted from the transfer of pension assets associated with the District's affiliation with FPPA and was not the result of additional spending. The Board requested that the audit include additional explanatory language or a footnote to clarify the circumstances and avoid misunderstanding of the disclosure.

Moved by Jon Smith and seconded by Scott Dorman to approve the 2025 audit, subject to a revision to the disclosure on page 13 providing additional clarification regarding the Volunteer Pension Fund transfer. (The Board authorized the Audit Committee to work with the auditor and approve the revised language.)
Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Steven Rodriguez presented the Treasurer's Report and reviewed the District's financial activity for the month of June. Property tax revenue was approximately $137,000 below budget for the month and $244,000 below budget year-to-date. He explained that property tax collections are budgeted based on historical collection patterns and noted that July collections were approximately $184,000 above budget, reducing the year-to-date variance to approximately $60,000 below budget. He indicated that the property tax revenue is expected to continue to trend toward budget as collections are received.

Sales tax revenue was approximately $55,000 below budget for June; however, year-to-date revenues remained on track and were generally consistent with expectations.

Expenses continued to trend below budget overall. Professional services were approximately $30,000 over budget, primarily due to consulting expenses associated with the District's sales tax initiative. The Board was previously aware of and anticipated these expenses.

June Paid Bills

Ryan Leahy reported on the June disbursements, and no concerns were raised.

Moved by Scott Dorman and seconded by Jon Smith to approve the transactions listed on the Treasurer's report provided at the July 27, 2026, meeting.
Motion carried unanimously.

Welcome New Fire Chief, Kevin Nunn

President, Sandi Smith, welcomed Chief Nunn to his first Board meeting as Fire Chief. The Board expressed its enthusiasm for his leadership and conveyed its support and availability as he transitions into the role

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Wildfire Resiliency Code Cooperative Agreement
provided an overview of the Wildfire Resiliency Code Cooperative Agreements with the Town of Estes Park and Larimer County. The agreements are intended to establish the cooperative framework necessary to implement the wildfire resiliency code.

The cooperative agreement with the Town of Estes Park had previously been approved by the Board and required execution by the Board President. Ashley Hernandez-Schlagel reviewed the County's revisions to the agreement and identified one remaining provision requiring further discussion with the County. She advised that the provision had previously been removed from the District's version of the agreement and that she did not believe the language was necessary.
The Board discussed the importance of reviewing and resolving the outstanding provision prior to execution of the agreement. Ashley advised that the Board could conditionally approve the agreement, with execution contingent upon resolution of the outstanding language in Section 5A.

Moved by Scott Dorman and seconded by Jon Smith to approve the cooperative agreement wildfire resiliency code between the District and Larimer County subject to agreement between the County and the District being reached on section 5A.
Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Jon Smith and seconded by Ryan Leahy to authorize President Sandi Smith to sign the Cooperative Agreement once the agreement has been reached in section 5A.
Motion carried unanimously.

Larimer County Emergency Management OEM Grant Agreement
Division Chief Landkamer presented the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between Larimer County and the Estes Valley Fire Protection District regarding the Larimer County Emergency Management OEM Grant. The agreement, which had been reviewed by District Attorney Ashley with no requested changes, formalizes the District's previously approved participation and allows the grant to be supplemented up to $36,000. The Board confirmed that members had reviewed the agreement and had no questions or concerns.

Moved by Ryan Leahy and seconded by Jon Smith to approve the IGA between Larimer County and the Estes Valley Fire Protection District.
Motion carried unanimously.

CWDG Thunder Mountain Mitigation Project Contractor Award
Division Chief Landkamer and Sara Barden presented the proposed independent services contract for the remaining 180 acres of the Thunder Mountain Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) Mitigation Project. The overall project will treat approximately 200 acres identified as extreme wildfire risk in the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). Larimer County Sheriff's Office has already been contracted to treat 20 acres, leaving 180 acres for the selected contractor.

The remaining treatment area consists of approximately 95 acres in Unit 2 and 85 acres in Unit 3 and will utilize both hand harvesting and mechanical treatment methods. The project is intended to improve forest resiliency, connect with fuel treatments completed by Rocky Mountain National Park, provide tactical firefighting opportunities, and help protect critical infrastructure, including the East Portal electrical substation, the Town's water treatment plant, and YMCA historical resources.

Sara issued an RFP to 31 contractors (12 local, 18 in-state, and one out-of-state). Nine contractors participated in the mandatory site visit, and four submitted proposals. Proposals were evaluated based on contractor qualifications, experience, pricing, and ability to meet the grant timeline. Jon and Sara, in consultation with the Estes Valley Watershed Coalition, recommended Pennington based on its experience with similar projects, strong references, local experience, ability to meet project timelines, and history of completing work within budget.

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The Board discussed the proposed fixed-price contract, including the absence of a specific change-order or price-adjustment provision. The Board agreed that any change to the fixed contract price or additional work would require Board approval and directed that the agreement reflect this process. The Board also discussed the overall project budget and grant funding.

Moved by Jon Smith and seconded by Ryan Leahy to approve an independent services contract between the District and the contractor selected by Division Chief Landkamer and his team regarding the CWDG Thunder Mountain Mitigation Project so long as no material changes are made to this agreement, also allowing President Sandi Smith to sign once approved by our attorney. Motion carried.

REPORTS

Community Risk Reduction Division

Prevention Division:

- Wildland Fire Risk Reduction Educator, Lasley, has completed 85 home assessments & 10 neighborhood assessments YTD.
- EVWC and ELSA had a very successful pinecone and pine needle drop off with two roll-offs of pinecone and pine needles and ELSA collected 202 bags of noxious weeds filling their roll-off.
- Another reminder of our next pine needle & pinecone drop-off that will be on
    - August 15 (9:00am – noon) located at Stanley Park by the pickleball courts
- WFRR Education Specialist Lasley's last day is August 1st. We wish him well in his upcoming adventures and thank him for the great work he has done while with us.
- Captain Sutherland is working on plan review experience with plan reviewer Whitney, providing comments for multiple projects, and getting started on more Stanley hotel projects. All new construction projects are going through Stacey for permit issuance and record keeping.
- Captain Sutherland is continuing inspections as needed, mostly on new construction and special events.
- Captain Sutherland is reviewing and issuing permits for special events with tents and continuing food truck inspections, as well as training Jael to do these inspections.
- Jael Morgan has started her job as Fire Code Inspector I and is shadowing Stacey and filling in on some inspections while Stacey is on vacation.
- Sara is continuing to check on work getting done for the 2025 COSWAP Grant project on Prospect Mountain/Curry Drive with LCCC. Crews have completed about 3 acres so far.
- Sara has completed the process of obtaining a contractor for the CWDG Thunder Mountain Project and has selected a contractor for the remaining 180 acres.
- Sara has met with the Larimer County Sheriff's Office-Emergency Services Phantom Canyon Crew for the CWDG Thunder Mountain Project that they are contracted to complete 20 acres along the boundary with RMNP and will be notifying Sara when they plan to begin work.
- Sara has been shadowing Logan and will be continuing to do HIZ assessments in his place during the transition period.
- DC Landkamer has been working with the Town of Estes Park and Larimer County on the cooperative agreements for implementation of the WFRC with the FD clarifying roles in implementation and enforcement of the WFRC.
- DC Landkamer is working on grant management for the 2022 FR-WRM
- DC Landkamer has been working through the hiring process for the WFRR Educator. An offer has been accepted by Ellis Thompson with a start date of August 17th.
- DC Landkamer and Sara continues to attend partner meetings when possible, including CWDG, BTWHP, NCFC, FACO, EVWC, Larimer County Woody Biomass Stakeholders, and TOEP Water Master Plan.
- Larimer County will be hosting a 50-year commemoration of the Big Thompson Flood on July 31, 2026, DC Landkamer and Interim Fire Chief Jones plan to attend.

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Facilities

- The AC unit for upstairs has failed and DC Landkamer is working on a potential replacement to identify cost.

Operations & Training Division

Training

- Fire academy kicks off Thursday night with 11 students from Estes, Big Elk Meadows, Glen Haven, Jamestown, and Pinewood Springs
- Auxiliaries did a big deep clean at the training grounds to prep for academy
- FF Wallace, and FF Brenner attended The Art of Reading Smoke class in Arvada
- Started structural firefighting skills this month, Forcible entry, and Ladders. Search and Rescue, Ventilation and Hose operations are coming up.

Operations

- Pump testing August 7th
- Ladder testing August 3rd & 4th
- National Night out August 4th coordinating with the PD
- Maintenance on apparatus continues. Planning to have the pump issues fixed before the pump testing on the 7th, parts have been difficult to get

Volunteers

The Department provided an overview of year-to-date call volume and significant incidents. Through June, the District responded to 429 calls, compared with 337 during the same period last year, representing an approximately 26% increase. At the current pace, annual call volume could approach 1,000 calls. The largest increase was in illegal burn/smoke investigation calls, which increased from 6 to 46. The Department also reported several recent lightning-related incidents and wildland fires, including a lightning strike that damaged a tree and nearby residence. Staff commended Department personnel for their rapid response and effective containment of multiple wildland fires, preventing them from escalating into larger incidents. Recognized Captain Speer and participating firefighters for completing more than 60 hours of engineering and apparatus training, including wildland, engine, tender, ladder, and driving operations. The training was noted as an important component of developing qualified apparatus operators and maintaining operational readiness. The Volunteer Auxiliary reported that approximately 13 homes have been served and more than 75 smoke alarms installed or replaced this year through the American Red Cross smoke alarm program. Highlighted newly promoted Lieutenant Trevor Igel.

Chief's Report

Chief Nunn provided brief remarks following the recent transfer of command and publicly recognized Chief Jones for his leadership and support during the transition. Chief Nunn also commended the department's leadership and personnel for their work and strong support within the community.

Chief Nunn requested input from the Board regarding the information and metrics it would find most valuable in future Chiefs' reports. The Board discussed potential areas including election-related matters, significant contract negotiations, personnel matters requiring Board-level involvement, public relations and communications, and strategic, mission, and organizational issues. It was agreed that the Chief would continue to report on key operational metrics and matters within his areas of responsibility.

UNFINISHED OR OLD BUSINESS -- None

NEW BUSINESS -- None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 24, 2026, at 4:30 pm.

ADJOURNMENT
Moved by Jon Smith and seconded by Ryan Leahy to adjourn the meeting.
Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:28 pm.

Secretary

The Mission of the Estes Valley Fire Protection District is to provide the citizens of and visitors to the Estes Valley with superior fire prevention, fire protection and emergency services in a safe and efficient manner."

"The Mission of the Board of Directors of the Estes Valley Fire Protection District is to establish policy, goals, strategies and financial leadership that are the foundation for the long-term sustainability of the District."