

**RECORD OF
PROCEEDINGS**

Meeting Minutes of the Estes Valley Fire Protection District

March 23, 2026, 4:30 p.m.

Dannels Fire Station, 901 N. St. Vrain Ave., Estes Park, CO 80517

Board: Sandra Smith, Scott Dorman, Jon Smith, Jeff Robbins (via Zoom)

Staff: Chief Warren Jones, Captain Stacey Sutherland, Division Chief Jon Landkamer,
Interim Division Chief Chris Thomas, Captain Justin Kearny, Marinda Baxter

Also Attending: Lt. Ron Bruchwalski, Nola Greenwald, Kelly Brenner, Lt. Nathan Meulener, Diana Van Der Ploeg, Steven Rodriguez (JVG), Dot Dorman, Michael Barnthouse, Captain Rick Spear, Logan Lasley, Patti Brown, Marianne Baxter, Alicia Paddock, Mike Cousineau.

Absent: Ryan Leahy

Sandra Smith called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Interim Chief Warren Jones led the Pledge of Allegiance

Marinda Baxter performed roll call – Board members Sandra Smith, Scott Dorman, Jeff Robbins, and Jon Smith present. Ryan Leahy absent.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Jeff Robbins and seconded by Scott Dorman to approve the Agenda for the March 23, 2026, board meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Jon Smith and seconded by Scott Dorman to approve the meeting minutes from the February 23, 2026, board meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. Financial Matters

Financial Report and February 2026 Paid Bills

District accountant Steven Rodriguez from JVG presented the monthly and year to date financials, and the February 2026 transactions report.

Moved by Jon Smith and seconded by Scott Dorman to approve the February 2026 paid bills.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. RESOLUTION 2026-05 – A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE COLORADO WILDFIRE RESILIENCY CODE WITH MODIFICATIONS.

The following draft resolution was discussed by the board:

**ESTES VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
RESOLUTION NO. 2026-05**

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE COLORADO WILDFIRE RESILIENCY CODE WITH
MODIFICATIONS**

MINUTES OF MARCH 23, 2026, MEETING

WHEREAS, the Estes Valley Fire Protection District ("District") is a quasi-municipal corporation and political subdivision of the State of Colorado and a duly organized and existing special district pursuant to Title 32, Article 1, Colorado Revised Statutes; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 32-1-1001(1)(h), C.R.S., the Board of Directors of the District (the "Board") has the power to manage, control, and supervise the business and affairs of the District; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 32-1-1001(1)(m), C.R.S., the Board has the power to adopt, amend, and enforce rules and regulations not in conflict with the Constitution and the laws of this State for carrying on the business, objects, and affairs of the Board and of the District; and

WHEREAS, Section 24-33.5-1237(2)(a), C.R.S., requires fire protection districts, municipalities, certain metropolitan districts, and counties to adopt a wildfire resiliency code to address wildfire risk within the wildland-urban interface; and

WHEREAS, Section 24-33.5-1237, C.R.S., creates dual jurisdiction between multiple governing bodies, thereby obligating multiple governing bodies to adopt and enforce wildfire resiliency codes within the same jurisdictional area; and

WHEREAS, the District's jurisdiction to adopt and enforce a wildfire resiliency code overlaps with the Town of Estes Park and Larimer County (each, individually an "Overlapping Jurisdiction" and collectively, the "Overlapping Jurisdictions"); and

WHEREAS, the Overlapping Jurisdictions plan on engaging in a cooperative agreement regarding the enforcement of their own wildfire resiliency codes or the adoption of the other's Code (each, a "Code") in compliance with the requirements of Section 24-33.5-1237, C.R.S., and 8 CCR 1507-39 (collectively, the "Wildfire Resiliency Laws"); and

WHEREAS, each Code shall be effective throughout the respective Overlapping Jurisdiction, including those portions of each Overlapping Jurisdiction within the District's boundaries (the "Shared Region"); and

WHEREAS, the District's Board has determined that certain modifications to the Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code Board's Model Code, which redlined modifications are attached hereto as Exhibit A, ("District Code") are necessary and meet the requirements of Section 24-33.5-1237, C.R.S., and 8CCR 1507-39 and otherwise exceed the standards adopted in the Model Code; and

WHEREAS, the District's Board hereby finds and determines that the adoption and administration of the District Code is in the best interest of the residents, taxpayers, and visitors to the District and cooperation with the Overlapping Jurisdictions regarding the enforcement of their Codes as they concerns the Overlapping Jurisdictions in order to comply with the Wildfire Resiliency Laws is also within the best interest of the residents, taxpayers, and visitors to the District; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Estes Valley Fire Protection District as follows:

1. **Adoption of the District's Code.** The District hereby adopts the Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code Board's Model Code with modifications as provided in Exhibit A. A clean version of the District's Code is attached as Exhibit B. The District's Code shall be effective within the District's boundaries.
2. **Code Enforcement.** The District will enforce the District's Code as specified therein. The District's Board hereby delegates authority to the Town of Estes Park for the enforcement of the District's Code as identified therein and to Larimer County as appropriate pursuant to its Code and such agreements will be further memorialized in a corresponding cooperation Agreement with these Overlapping Jurisdictions.
3. **Severability.** If any part, section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Resolution is for any reason held to be invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions.

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4. **Effective Date.** This Resolution shall take effect and be enforced beginning on July 1, 2026.

ADOPTED this _ day of _____, 2026.

Moved by Jeff Robbins and seconded by Jon Smith to adopt Resolution 2026-05 A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE COLORADO WILDFIRE RESILIENCY CODE WITH MODIFICATIONS.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Fire Chief Recruitment and Selection.

1. Chief Jones presented a proposed fire chief search and selection schedule implementing the recruitment and selection work plan presented by GMP Consultants.

Moved by Scott Dorman and seconded by Jon Smith to approve the fire chief search and selection schedule as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Appointment of and Charge to the Fire Chief Search Committee.

- a. The Board discussed the creation of a Fire Chief Search Committee and what its composition should be. Proposal by President Smith that the Search Committee be comprised of two board members, the two division chiefs, Chief Jones, Marinda Baxter, Captain Spear, and a volunteer member.

Moved by Scott Dorman and seconded by Jeff Robbins to approve the creation of the search committee as described.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Board then appointed President Smith and Vice President Dorman to serve as the two Board members on the Search Committee.

- b. The Board discussed the charge to be given the Search Committee and concluded that the charge should be (i) to assist consultants in acquiring input from stakeholders in developing a candidate profile; (ii) review and approve the candidate profile and advertising strategy provided by the consultant; (iii) narrow the list of semi-finalists provided by the consultant to the finalists; and (iv) in cooperation with the consultant, design the interview process and identify the stakeholders for finalist interviews.

Moved by Jon Smith and seconded by Jeff Robbins to charge the Search Committee as described.

Motion carried unanimously.

3. Fire Chief Job Description. The Board reviewed and discussed the Fire Chief job description (Policy 701) presented in the board book. It was decided that the candidate should maintain a residence in the primary response area of the District, so no modification should be made to that provision at this time. The Fire Chief Search Committee was instructed to return to the Board for authorization if the Committee believes it should expand the Chief candidate pool to applicants that are not residents of the District.

Moved by Jon Smith and seconded by Scott Dorman to approve Policy 701, the Fire Chief job description.

Motion carried unanimously.

D. New Community Risk Reduction Positions

1. The Board discussed the job description (Policy 724) for the new Wildfire Risk Reduction Project Specialist.

Moved by Jeff Robbins and seconded by Jon Smith to approve the new Policy 724, job description for Wildfire Risk Reduction Project Specialist.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. The Board discussed the job description (Policy 725) for the new Fire Code Inspector.

Moved by Jon Smith and seconded by Scott Dorman to approve the new Policy 725, job description for Fire Code Inspector.

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Motion carried unanimously.

3. The Board discussed modifying Policy 726, Wildfire Risk Reduction Education Specialist job description, to add the requirement of NFPA-certified wildfire mitigation specialist, adding a desired qualification of Fire Instructor I, and supervising the Neighborhood Ambassador Program. This revision to the policy will increase the Educator's pay as the pay scale will move from the range associated with Firefighter II to Specialist I. This is a non-uniformed position.

Moved by Scott Dorman and seconded by Jon Smith to approve the revised Policy 726, Wildfire Risk Reduction Education Specialist job description.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. The Board discussed the proposed revisions to Policy 180 detailing the salary ranges of Operations, Training, & Prevention (Uniformed), Community Risk Reduction (Non-Uniformed), Administration, and Leadership. The proposed revisions were made to align the salary structure of the District's personnel with the restructuring plan being implemented and the new positions created, as well as changes to previous positions, occurring as part of that restructuring.

Motion by Jon Smith and seconded by Scott Dorman to approve the proposed revisions to Policy 180.

Motion carried unanimously.

E. Board Code of Ethics.

1. The Board discussed the draft Board of Directors Code of Ethics prepared by the District's Counsel in coordination with the Board President. The Code of Ethics will be attached to the Resolution to be adopted and enable its implementation.

2. RESOLUTION 2026-06, RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS CODE OF ETHICS.

WHEREAS, the Estes Valley Fire Protection District ("District") is a quasi-municipal corporation and political subdivision of the State of Colorado and a duly organized and existing special district pursuant to Title 32, Article 1, Colorado Revised Statutes; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 32-1-1001(1)(h), C.R.S., the Board of Directors of the District (the "Board") has the power to manage, control, and supervise the business and affairs of the District; and

WHEREAS, holding public office involves public trust, and the Board must operate under the highest ethical standards to preserve public confidence in the District's governance; and

WHEREAS, the District, acting by and through the Board recognizes a need for a Board of Directors Code of Ethics ("Code"); and

WHEREAS, the Board intends this Code to align with the statutory ethical principles in Article 18, Title 24, C.R.S., including restrictions on gifts and conflicts and the contracting limitations set forth in Section 24-18-201, C.R.S.; and

WHEREAS, the Board is committed to ongoing training and acknowledgment of this Code by Directors to support effective, ethical governance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of the District:

1. Adoption of Code of Ethics. The Board hereby adopts the Board of Directors Code of Ethics, attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by this reference.
2. Severability. If any part, section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this Resolution is for any reason held to be invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions.

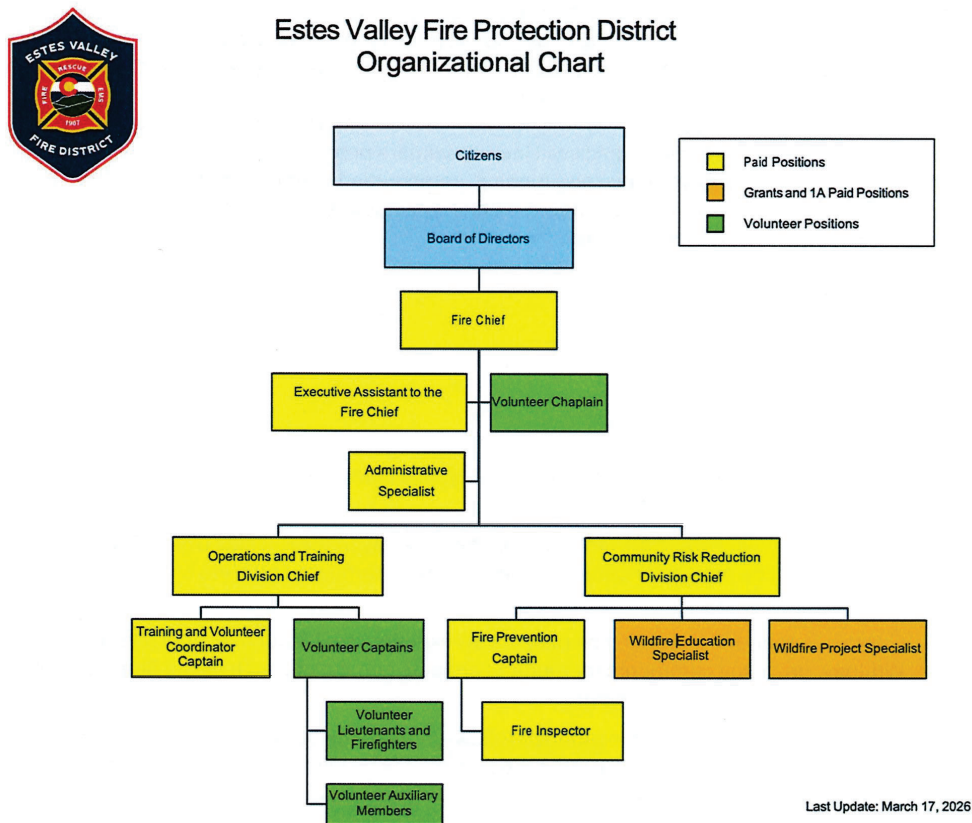
3. Effective Date. This Resolution shall take effect and be enforced immediately upon its approval by the Board.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS ____ DAY OF ____, 2026 BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ESTES VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT.

*Moved by Jeff Robbins and seconded by Jon Smith to adopt Resolution 2026-06, Resolution Adopting the Board of Directors Code of Ethics.
Motion carried unanimously.*

F. District Organizational Structure

On behalf of the Restructuring Committee, Sandra Smith reported to the Board the committee's recommendation that the District be organized consistent with the following chart, which was accompanied by a table outlining the duties and functions of the Chief and two Division Chiefs:



This organizational structure reflects the culmination of the Restructuring Committee's work.

Moved by Jon Smith and seconded by Jeff Robbins to approve the organizational chart presented by the Restructuring Committee.

Motion carried unanimously.

G. Interim Fire Chief Work Plan.

Chief Jones requested Board input concerning his work plan as he serves the remainder of the interim period. He suggested that he should focus on seven priorities as follows:

1. Administrative support of the fire chief recruitment and selection process;
2. Select and onboard the second administrative position, including training, transfer, and balancing of administrative tasks between the two administrative positions;

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3. Onboard new operations chief;
4. Assist Community Risk Reduction Division Chief in selecting and onboarding two new Community Risk Reduction positions;
5. Prepare for the April board work session on financial independence and tax election for 2017;
6. Prepare for a budget amendment in July, including an assessment of the 2026 budget status, contract costs, and a new wildfire budget and accounting system; and
7. Implementation of as many elements of the public information and external communications strategy as possible within current resources.

The Board agreed with these priorities.

H. Public Engagement and External Communications.

Chief Jones reported that he is currently serving as the District's PIO. He provided the board with an outline of an aspirational public information and external communication strategy. Chief Jones noted that the District is beginning to use social media more, especially providing real-time incident information. The District is also hosting community and special events. The District is also engaged in news media contact using traditional methods like press releases, particularly when incidents occur. The Chief has begun writing opinion pieces on major policy issues in the "When the Bell Rings" column. Upcoming topics will include wildfire preparedness, the new chief selection process, District governance and funding, combination staffing (what it is and how it works), and then the introduction of the new fire chief. Chief Jones reported that work is also underway to update the District's website.

Brief recess taken at 6:57 p.m.

Meeting resumed at 7:01 p.m.

REPORTS

Community Risk Reduction Division

- Wildland Fire Risk Reduction Educator, Lasley, has completed 28 home assessments & 7 neighborhood assessments YTD.
- Presented to Visit Estes Park last week on the Gateway to the Rockies Grant. Partnerships like these will be critical for community engagement throughout the life of the grant and beyond.
- Captain Sutherland is working on plan review experience with our new plan reviewer Whitney, providing comments for multiple projects coming up, such as the Stanley Hotel projects, new development plans.
- Captain Sutherland has had continued follow-ups with the Stanley and will be performing re-inspections for the Stanley Hotel properties as follow-up from the annual inspection from December. Captain Sutherland is continuing inspections as needed, mostly on new construction and special events.
- Captain Sutherland is working on 3 fire investigations and working with DFPC on the Expedition Lodge investigation.
- Captain Sutherland provided training for auxiliary members for inspections on special events and tents. beginning ride a long training. The next event is this weekend with Frozen Dead Guy Days.
- Captain Sutherland will be giving a presentation next week to the Aspen Club on emergency preparedness.
- Captain Sutherland is also working on a presentation for EVICS Friends and family childcare program to provide them with fire safety information and home assessments. This will be an annual course for their program participants.
- DC Landkamer and Captain Sutherland recommended Stage 1 fire restrictions for the District to be proactive with the increase in visitation for spring break and no substantial precipitation in the forecast, combined with the heat and expected winds.

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- DC Landkamer is working on finalizing agreements between all parties to get the CWDG Thunder Mountain project started. Working with Larimer County Sheriff's Department/Emergency Services to get work done on the CWDG project along the boundary with RMNP. They are open to committing to 20 acres of the work that requires hand work. Will be working on an RFP for the larger portion of the project next along with EVWC.
- DC Landkamer is working on grant implementation and management for the 2023 COSWAP, 2022 FR-WRM, and 2023 CWDG Thunder Mountain, and 2025 COSWAP.
- DC Landkamer attended a mandatory orientation with DNR staff for the 2025 COSWAP grant last week. This project is tentatively scheduled for late June, July and into August. More information will be released once it is confirmed.
- All three Prevention staff are currently in the Instructor I training.
- DC Landkamer has been participating in the Re-Org committee and has been working on the job descriptions for two open positions which were presented today.
- DC Landkamer continues to attend partner meetings when possible, including CWDG, BTWHP, NCFC, FACO, EVWC, Larimer County Woody Biomass Stakeholders, and TOEP Water Master Plan.
- DC Landkamer is participating in the 2025 Hazard Mitigation plan update that will be going on through Larimer County over the next year. They are updating the plan from 2021.
- Steve Thoms celebration of life, Saturday, March 28th, 1100 @ Ruesch Auditorium/YMCA. We will have two apparatus there and will do a bell ceremony.
- **Facilities**
 - We lost our 40' blue spruce at the SW corner of the firehouse. Thanks to Captain Kearney and Skip Bauming for assisting in pulling it off the building and moving it out of the way. FFs Trevor Igel and Michael Barnhouse processed the tree and removed the trunk for firewood.

Operations & Training Division

Training:

- Thursday and Saturday are testing days for Instructor 1 class
- Finished up wildland month (20 current red cards)
- This week there is a volunteer meeting, next week family dinner with power and communications afterwards, and then starting 3 weeks of rescue.
- I presented at the Senior Symposium on Saturday for 70ish people
- Getting started on wildland IQS audit needs

Operations:

- Working on a proposal to put Starlink in command vehicles
- Staff 73 getting repaired
- Clarifying alarm levels with dispatch to improve incident communication

Volunteer Captain Report

- To date the District has responded to 177 calls, including 57 calls just in the month of March. This is a 36% increase from 2025.
- The District currently has 36 Volunteer members. Three new members are in the process of coming on board.
- The District currently has 8 Auxiliary members. The goal is to build the program to 15 members.
- Effective last week, Lt. Meulener took over the liaison position to the Auxiliary.
- Steve Thoms' memorial service will be held this weekend. He served in the department as a volunteer member for 25 years.