RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Special Meeting Minutes of the Estes Valley Fire Protection District
February 2, 2026, 3:00 p.m.
Via Zoom

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

Staff: Chief Warren Jones, Chief Jon Landkamer, Interim Chief Chris Thomas,

Also Attending: Justin Kearney, Lt. Megan Platz, Marinda Baxter, Katie Steiner, Michael Barnthouse, Logan Lasley, Alicia Paddock, Cpt. Stacey Sutherland

Absent: all present

Sandra Smith called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

Interim Chief Warren Jones led the Pledge of Allegiance

Marinda Baxter performed roll call – All present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Moved by Jon Smith and seconded by Ryan Leahy to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT
None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
The minutes of the January 19, 2026, board meeting will be presented for approval at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Discussion/Action re Administrative Assessment and Structure of Administrative Division. Chief Jones presented the staff report on the administrative structure being proposed and the actions he is requesting that the board take to implement that structure. The proposed actions are based on the administrative assessment that was conducted by CRS and presented to the Board at its January 19, 2026, meeting. In developing these actions, Chief Jones consulted with the Town of Estes Park, the Estes Valley Recreation and Parks District, the Estes Valley Library District, and the District's human resources consultant CPS HR.

The first request is that the Board approve replacing the current administrative positions of Administrative Assistant and Chief of Staff with an Administrative Specialist and Executive Assistant to the Fire Chief, with both positions reporting directly to the Fire Chief. The Executive Assistant to the Fire Chief will focus primarily on the District's business services and board support. The Administrative Specialist will focus primarily on administrative support for the District's Operations and Training Division as well as more general administrative services to the District. Both would be non-exempt positions.

Board members stated that the organization proposed – replacing the current administrative structure of Chief of Staff and administrative assistant with the two positions of Executive Assistant to the Fire Chief and Administrative Specialist make sense.
Moved by Ryan Leahy and seconded by Scott Dorman to replace the current administrative positions of Administrative Assistant and Chief of Staff with the two positions of Administrative Specialist and Executive Assistant to the Fire Chief, with both positions reporting directly to the Fire Chief.

Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Action re Administrative Job Descriptions.

Chief Jones reported that the job descriptions for the two positions – Administrative Assistant to the Fire Chief, Policy 705, and Administrative Specialist, Policy 704 – were developed in collaboration with the District's current administrative assistant and two division chiefs. They were also reviewed and approved by the District's human resource consultant CPS HR. The existing policies that contain administrative job descriptions – former Policies 704, 705, and 707 would be deleted from the policy manual.
Moved by Jeff Robbins and seconded by Jon Smith to discontinue existing Policies 704, 705, and 707.
Motion carried unanimously.
Moved by Ryan Leahy and seconded by Jeff Robbins to approve new Policies 704 (job description for Administrative Specialist) and 705 (job description for Executive Assistant to the Fire Chief) in the forms set forth in the Board Book.
Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Action re Administrative Pay Scale.
Chief Jones proposes using the administrative pay ranges of the current Specialists I and II set forth in existing Policy 180. If approved, this action would amend Policy 180 by substituting the pay ranges in existing Policy 180 with the administrative pay ranges set forth below. If these new administrative pay ranges are approved and both positions start at Step 1, the total annual salary cost will be $157,497 this year. This is well less than the $210,604 budgeted for the two current administrative positions in the 2026 budget.

Position	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Administrative Specialist	$71,052	$73,894	$76,850	$79,924	$83,120
Executive Assistant to the Fire Chief	$86,445	$89,903	$93,499	$97,239	$101,129
Total	$157,497	$163,797	$170,349	$177,163	$184,249

Moved by Ryan Leahy and seconded by Jeff Robbins to amend Policy 180 to delete the current five salary ranges set forth for Administration and replace them with the proposed ranges of Administrative Specialist and Executive Assistant to the Fire Chief.
Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Action re Waiver of Policy 202.
Chief Jones stated that before implementing an internal/external recruitment for the new administrative positions, he would like to attempt an internal recruitment for one or both positions depending on the availability of qualified internal candidates. To conduct an internal-only search, the Board would need to waive the requirement of Policy 202 that requires that he recruit both internally and externally.

The Board noted that it would prefer that both positions be offered to our current administrative assistant and that, to the extent necessary, an internal-only recruitment process occur only with respect to that position. An internal and external recruitment process should be utilized with respect to whichever position is not chosen by the current administrative assistant, or both if the current administrative assistant chooses not to put in for either position.
Moved by Jeff Robbins and seconded by Jon Smith to waive the requirement of Policy 202 that requires external recruitment as well as internal recruitment only to the extent that the District's current administrative assistant is interested in one of the two administrative positions just created by the Board and only with respect to that specific position.
Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Action re Resolution 2026-03 **APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERIM FIRE CHIEF AND APPROVING AN EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT**.
Discussion was held concerning Resolution 2026-03. Chief Jones noted that the past few months has been stressful, but the has successfully navigated discussions around filling the Operations division chief position and rebuilding administrative services. We will turn next to prevention services and wildland fire issues. We also have quite a bit of work to do on the 2026 budget and soon the 2027 budget. And we also will be searching for a new fire chief.

It was observed that a significant turning point came when the President asked those in attendance at a Board meeting to speak to their thoughts on a significant issue. The Board agreed that we should all be mindful of the stressors being faced by the District, its staff, volunteers, and Board members, and do our best to mitigate those stressors as we navigate this work. The President indicated that she would continue to exercise the discretion to seek input from members, staff, and the community on certain issues as we continue our work and that it may be a good idea at times to do that later in certain Board meetings on issues of particular significance.

ESTES VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT RESOLUTION NO. 2026-03
A RESOLUTION APPOINTING AN INTERIM CHIEF AND APPROVING AN EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

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, the Board of Directors of the District ("Board") has the power to appoint and hire employees pursuant to Section 32-1-1001(1)(i) C.R.S.; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 4 of the District's Bylaws, the Board may appoint a temporary, interim Fire Chief who shall serve at the pleasure of the Board in accordance with the Interim Fire Chief job description; and

WHEREAS, the District requires the services of an Interim Fire Chief while the District conducts a formal search for a Fire Chief who will act as the District's Chief Executive Officer and serve at the pleasure of the Board for as long as the Board deems appropriate; and

WHEREAS, given the District's identified need for an Interim Fire Chief to perform those functions identified in the Interim Fire Chief job description, and following a successful period of time as an independent contractor, the Board has determined to appoint Warren Jones as the District's Interim Fire Chief;

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

1. Appointment of Interim Fire Chief. The Board hereby appoints Warren Jones to the position of Interim Fire Chief, subject to full execution of the Employment Agreement referenced below.

2. Approval of Employment Agreement. The Board hereby approves the Employment Agreement between the District and Warren Jones in substantially the form attached hereto. The Board authorizes the President, or in her absence, any other director of the District to execute the Employment Agreement on behalf of the District and to take all actions necessary to implement the terms of the Agreement.

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.

4. 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.

Motion by Ryan Leahy and seconded by Scott Dorman to adopt Resolution 2026-03 ***APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERIM FIRE CHIEF AND APPROVING AN EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT.***
Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS
None.

UNFINISHED OR OLD BUSINESS
Discussion about the process to be used in the hiring of an Operations and Training Division Chief. The Board indicated that it wants to ensure that there are a number of internal applicants for that position. Concern was expressed that if we have only one or two internal applicants for the position, we are not fulfilling our duty to the community. Chief Jones will put the job notice out for people to submit their applications by February 20 and return to the Board with the number of applicants for the position. The Board will then decide whether the process should continue to be internal only or whether external recruitment should also be pursued.

NEW BUSINESS

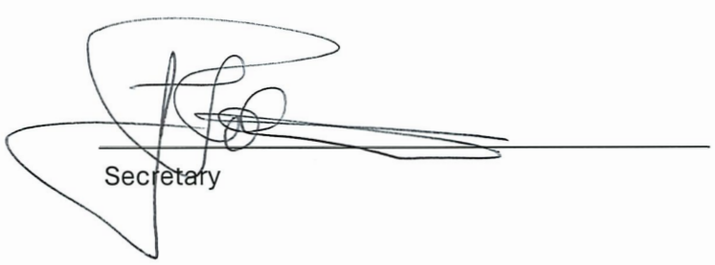
None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 23, 2026, at 4:30 PM. There will be a study session for a presentation on the OMA beginning at 3 pm in advance of that Board meeting. There will be a meeting of the Pension Board held after the study session and immediately prior to the regularly scheduled meeting on February 23. The Board will also participate in a joint meeting with the Town of Estes Park Board on February 13, 2026, at 8 am via Zoom.

Moved by Jeff Robbins and seconded by Jon Smith, to adjourn the meeting.
Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:12 PM.



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."