



**CENTRAL VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**215 Wings Way  
Belgrade, MT 59714  
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**MEETING PLACE:** Central Valley Fire District, Station 1  
215 Wings Way, Belgrade, MT

**DATE:** February 10, 2026

**TIME:** 5:30 p.m.

**ATTENDANCE:** (Present) (Absent)

<b>Trustees:</b>	Darren Wilkins, Chairman	X
	Ron Murray, Vice Chairman	X
	Mark MacLeod, Sec/Treas.	X
	Rob Holt	X
	Ramie Blakeman	X
<b>Fire Chief:</b>	Jay Wittwer	X
<b>Operations Chief:</b>	Jeff Hurley	X
<b>Fire Marshal:</b>	Jake Zlomie	X
<b>Acting Clerk:</b>	Debbie Bloem	X

**NOTICE:** ALL MEETINGS OF THE CENTRAL VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT BOARD  
OF TRUSTEES ARE RECORDED

**GUESTS/VISITORS:** Stephen McAdams, Becca Locke, Ryan Olson, Samantha Honatke,  
Justin Monroe, Dylan White, Olivia George, Jeff Royce, Deanna  
Yung, Collin Brozka, Sean Rodino II, Michael Hilbert, Nick Stinson

Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Chairman Wilkins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AGENDA:** As presented.

**MINUTES:** Trustee Holt moved to approve the **January 13, 2026 minutes** as submitted. Trustee Murray seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Trustee Holt** inquired whether the move from T-Mobile to AT&T was savings related or service related. Fire Marshal Zlomie responded that it was due to priority bandwidth.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS:** Trustee MacLeod moved to approve **the financial reports**. Trustee Holt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Central Valley Fire District received a thank you for the use of the Training Classroom by the **4H Beef Project**. The department also received a thank you from the 18-21 Transitions class for their **tour of Station 1** and noting that they particularly enjoyed the jaws of life and "driving" the fire truck.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**FIRE CHIEF REPORT:** As submitted.

**Chief Jay Wittwer** reported that the new EMS Division Chief, Pat Songer will begin employment with the department on April 15<sup>th</sup>. A social media post will follow soon.

Chief Wittwer asked BC White and BC Monroe to come forward. Each of the three BC's, including BC Stratman have completed Fire Officer III which is unusual. BC White and BC Monroe have both worked hard to achieve the **Chief Fire Officer** designation through CPSE. This is a significant step to Executive Leadership. BC Monroe thanked Chief Wittwer for his vision in encouraging this pursuit. BC White added that most CFO's are in larger, busier departments

and appreciated the support of the leadership as well as his crew in this accomplishment.

Chief Wittwer reported that the new **Streamline website** is almost ready to be put online with some community testing coming up soon. Regularly scheduled **open houses** rotating through each of the stations, beginning with Station 2, will begin in February or March. **CPSE Community Risk Assessment/ Standards of Cover** classes, working towards accreditation, are now rescheduled for February 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Revenue enhancement processes continue.

**OPERATIONS REPORT:**

As submitted.

**Deputy Chief Jeff Hurley** reported on **incident responses** and that Medic 5-2 calls have increased off this month. **BC Stratman** has slowed his CFO process to head up the EMS Division until the new EMS Division Chief, Pat Songers is able to begin with the department in April.

He also reported on the **specialty teams** and the outreach that the teams provide through multiple agency training while also enhancing the capabilities of the crew in emergency responses. In answer to a question from Chairman Wilkins, DC Hurley replied that the while the **seasonal Wildland Team** will begin in May, the department has members who have wildland certifications and are prepared to report for a deployment at any time. **Captain Anderson** continues to be very active in developing the Wildland Division and he and FM Zlomie are working on defense communication for rural residents.

**FIRE PREVENTION REPORT:** As submitted.

**Fire Marshal Zlomie** presented the system reporting from last year compared to January of 2026. **Fire Inspector Dyas** has officially retired as February 6<sup>th</sup> with well wishes from the department. FM Zlomie reported that work on the **new website** continues with plans for it to go live on April 1<sup>st</sup>. The department has migrated **from T-Mobile to AT&T FirstNet** as mentioned

during the Financial Reports. There are additional services available through FirstNet for large incidents as needed.

**LOCAL 4939 REPORT:**

As submitted.

**Union President Nick Stinson** reported on outreach efforts from the Union to the community with **two scholarships for high school seniors**. The Stairclimb Team is hosting a fundraiser at the Picklr for the **Leukemia & Lymphoma Society**. Union members are actively supporting the development of the **EMS Reserve program**. He recognized Chief White and Chief Monroe for their accomplishment in achieving Chief Fire Officer. President Stinson extended an invitation to participate in a **ride along** to get a clearer view of what the department does each day.

**VOLUNTEER REPORT:**

As submitted.

**Volunteer Becca Locke** reported that a new **volunteer fire academy** began on February 4<sup>th</sup> with fourteen participants, eleven of which are EMS members along with three new volunteers. Three current volunteer members are participating in the **LLS Stairclimb in Seattle** on March 8<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers also are active in assisting with **community outreach**, such as supporting CPR classes through the library.

**TRUSTEE REPORT:**

**Trustee Ramie Blakeman** reported that after further research, the practice of having **individual conversations between elected officials and the public** is supported by the Montana Constitution. If this was not the case, it could be construed as a gag order, preventing unofficial conversations when trustees are out in the community. One on one conversations may not include commitments to policy decisions by a board member, but policies may be explained one on one. Three or more members are a quorum and may not gather to discuss business or to make decisions. If three or more trustees meet to discuss business or make decisions, an open meeting notice must be published and minutes must be recorded. **Public comment opportunities are only required in relationship to action items or board decisions**. In this way the public has an opportunity to weigh in before action

is taken. These findings are referenced in Montana Constitution article 2, section 8; article 2, section 9; article 13, section 35; article 2, section 3, 201; 2, 3, 202; 2, 3, 203; the DOJ on open meetings with the Attorney General on four rulings and the Montana Supreme Court regarding four cases, with special attention to Flint and Hancock.

**Trustee Blakeman** contacted the Election Office to obtain information regarding how the last **Mill Levy Election results were reflected according to precinct**. One observation is that the further the voter resides from Stations 1 and 3, the increased percentage of no votes. Station 2 area voted no at an increased rate. In 2023 the District's precinct map changed. This type of information should help inform where further outreach is needed. Trustee Blakeman also noted that there has been seventy percent growth in the District since Covid and impact fees and additional revenue is not being realized with that growth.

Trustee Murray moved to accept **the reports** as submitted. Trustee MacLeod seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**ORDER OF BUSINESS:**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**FY27 Budget process update.**

Chief Wittwer distributed a timeline for the FY27 Budget process. The preliminary budget process is moving forward.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**Consideration and Adoption of Resolution 252610 updating the Reimbursement of Expenditures for the Fleet Services Facility Loan.**

Chief Wittwer thanked Financial Manager Samantha Honatke for her extraordinary efforts to work with the attorney to make sure that the necessary resolutions for the loan processes were completed. Financial Manager Honatke explained that this resolution simply updates the previous loan resolution to expand the timeline for submitting expenses in order to access funds from the loan for the Fleet Facility.

Trustee MacLeod moved to adopt **Resolution 252610**. Trustee Holt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The next regular meeting of the Central Valley Fire District Board of Trustees is scheduled for **March 10, 2026**.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

  
Darren Wilkins, Chairman

  
Mark MacLeod, Secretary/Treasurer

ATTEST:   
Debbie Bloem, Clerk