



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

**215 Wings Way
Belgrade, MT, 59714
406-388-4480
(Fax): 406-388-6270**

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

DATE: March 10, 2026

TIME: 5:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE:		<u>(Present)</u>	<u>(Absent)</u>
Trustees:	Darren Wilkins, Chairman	X	
	Ron Murray, Vice Chairman	X	
	Mark MacLeod, Sec/Treas.	X	
	Rob Holt	X	
	Ramie Blakeman	X	
Fire Chief:	Jay Wittwer	X	
Operations Chief:	Jeff Hurley	X	
Fire Marshal:	Jake Zlomie	X	
Acting Clerk:	Samantha Honatke	X	

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

GUESTS/VISITORS: Dwight B Short, Peter Stump, Mo Holt, Joe Doidge, Stephen
McAdams, Chris Cameron, Ann K, Anthony Stratman, Jason
Anderson, Brinn Fiorentino, Jerry Zorechak, Tyler Samlowski, Cody

Lipperd, Will Roberts, Miranda Johnson, Nick Stinson, Pat Songer, via Zoom.

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 **March 10, 2026 minutes** as submitted. Trustee Murray seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

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

COMMUNICATIONS: CVFD, specifically A Shift, received a thank you for their care and gentleness in their response to an **EMS emergency and transport**. The **Belgrade Head Start Kids** sent pictures of fire trucks to say thank you to the department for all that they do. Invitations were received to the **Belgrade Community Library One Year Anniversary Celebration** and to the **Brainard Farm Fair**.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT: As submitted.
Fire Chief Wittwer noted that paramedic members are vital, along with all our members to the Advanced Life Support EMS services that the department provides. Chief Wittwer recognized **Miranda Johnson, Tyler Samlowski, Briana Scherrer, Will Roberts and Ashley Coulthard** and their different paths to becoming paramedics in the past year. Ashley Coulthard was not able to attend.
Chief Wittwer reviewed the value of personal credentialing which adds a level of professionalism to the fire service overall and the department in particular. **Fire Marshal Jake Zlomie and Deputy Chief Jeff Hurley** were recognized for their completion of

Company Fire Marshal Officer and Company Fire Officer Credentialing, respectively. Fire Marshal Zlomie thanked the department for its support. **Pat Songer, the newly hired EMS Division Chief** was introduced via Zoom and has been approved for his Chief EMS Officer credentials. Chief Songer shared that the process was very rewarding and appreciated the recognition. He looks forward to meeting everyone next month. **Captain Mitch Davis** has received his Fire Officer credentials and **Chief Wittwer** has renewed his CFO credentialing.

Chief Wittwer confirmed the continuing involvement of staff in **community outreach** with classes and participation in meetings throughout the community. The **new CVFD website** will go live next month, and open houses are being planned for the various stations in the District. Efforts continue on revenue enhancement processes and the county-wide EMS system development.

Chief Wittwer attended a planning meeting for the **City of Belgrade** and shared some traffic control updates and confirmed that the department will be prepared to navigate those changes. The City is staying on top of water supply and is working towards being designated as a tree city and converting the Quaw building to the Justice Center.

OPERATIONS REPORT:

As submitted.

Deputy Chief Hurley reported on call volume for the month. In February the EMS Reserve crew completed 48 transports and DC Hurley added appreciation for BC Stratman for managing that program. **Large animal rescue and water rescue** teamed up to help rescue a horse stuck in a creek last month. This highlighted the importance of continuing to train and expand members abilities in order to be ready for various scenarios. **Seasonal wildland firefighters** will onboard in the first week of May, with Captain Anderson facilitating that program. Training Officer McAdams is running the **Volunteer Firefighter Academy** and preparing for the **company officer promotional process**.

FIRE PREVENTION REPORT: As submitted.

Fire Marshal Zlomie reported on the current compliance rate. The department will be focusing on a preplan program for the various

buildings in the District. He confirmed that the website will be going live next month.

LOCAL 4939 REPORT:

As submitted.

President Nick Stinson reported on meetings and trainings that Union members participated in, including the Jason Baker Educational Conference and an executive board meeting. The rescue teams have been active and effective in animal rescue and extrication this past month. President Stinson reported that the Seattle Stairclimb Team raised over \$5,500 for the Blood Cancer United organization, with over three million dollars raised in total. He once again extended an invitation to anyone to ride along with the crew.

**Volunteer Association
Report:**

Volunteer PJ Stump reported that the Volunteer Academy is going well with fourteen members. The Academy will be completed on April 22nd; graduation details will follow.

TRUSTEE REPORT:

Trustee Ron Murray announced that former Fire Chief Brett Waters passed away on February 2nd of cancer. He had a large impact in this area and others in the fire service. Chief Wittwer added that Chief Waters was highly respected in the wildland fire service in Nevada and Chief Wittwer appreciates the accomplishments that he made that we now benefit from at CVFD.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Resident **Dwight Short** expressed his appreciation for the great resource that the paramedics are for the department.

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

DISCUSSION ITEMS: FY27 Budget Process Update

Chief Wittwer introduced Financial Manager Samantha Honatke to provide the FY27 budget process update. She reported that budget requests have been received from members and are being reviewed by the executive team. At the end of March, that process will be completed, and Budget Presentations will begin in April, with a presentation for the Board during the April meeting.

Location Options for Combining Board Meetings with Station Open Houses

Chief Wittwer explained that the Community Outreach Team has been exploring ways to communicate better with the residents of the District. **Trustee Blakeman** reported that the idea of holding meetings at various CVFD facilities, followed by open houses, presented a way to give the community insights into the workings of the department, the challenges faced, and how the department is funded. Using this plan, the board reaches out into the community and meets them where they are at. Chief Wittwer suggested that this plan be implemented next month by moving the board meeting to Station 2, followed by an open house. This was agreed to by the Board. The word will be spread to the HOA's with a letter and on the website.

ACTION ITEMS: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Board of Trustees Meeting Processes.

Trustee Ramie Blakeman explained the desire to provide a concrete structure for board members to follow for board meetings. It is also important to help the public understand how board meetings are run and when they are able to make comments. Some discussion followed regarding adding communications to the typical meeting flow. Trustee Blakeman pointed out that it is the Roberts Rules of Order, *revised edition* which will be utilized.

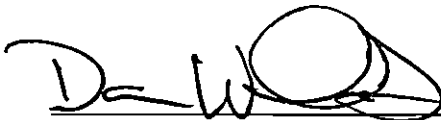
Trustee Holt moved to approve the Board of Trustees Meeting Practices Policy with the addition of Communications in the agenda. Trustee Blakeman seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next regular meeting of the Central Valley Fire District Board of Trustees is scheduled for **April 14, 2026, immediately following the Quarterly IFC Board of Appeals Meeting.** These meetings will take place at Station 2.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:36 p.m.



Darren Wilkins, Chairman



Mark MacLeod, Secretary/Treasurer

ATTEST: 

Debbie Bloem, Clerk