



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

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MEETING PLACE: Central Valley Fire District, Station 2
3650 Springhill Road, Bozeman, MT

DATE: April 14, 2026

TIME: Immediately following the Quarterly Meeting of the IFC Board of Appeals which began at 5:30 pm

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	
EMS Chief		
Pat Songer	X	
Acting Clerk:		
Debbie Bloem	X	

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

GUESTS/VISITORS: Glenn Bradbury, Samantha Honatke, Pat Songer, Joe Doidge, Philip and JoAnne Naro, Mo Holt, Eddy Ivey, Trisha McFarland, Martin Kepner, John Allen, Lauren Fuller, Grace Murray, Mitch Davis, Nick Johnson, Jeff Royce, Jason Anderson, Dylan White, Stephen McAdams, Brad Appleton, Todd Frediani and Joel Fassbinder.

Meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m.

AGENDA: As presented.

Chairman Wilkins took a moment to share expectations and directions regarding interaction with the board and the public and referred attendees to the code of conduct for board meetings. During public comment individuals may address the board for up to three minutes on any matter subject to the jurisdiction of the Central Valley Fire District that is not on the agenda. If they will not be able to stay for that agenda item they may address the matter but may not again address that item later. He reminded attendees that this is a business meeting and it is not possible to engage in discussions with members of the public during this time. Discussions may take place after the meeting. After each agenda item, there will be an opportunity to comment for up to three minutes about that item.

MINUTES: Trustee Murray moved to approve the **March 10, 2026 minutes** as submitted. Trustee MacLeod seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

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

COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

As submitted. Fire Chief Jay C Wittwer asked Captain Anderson, Captain Royce and Captain Mitch Davis to come forward to be recognized for the completion of their Fire Officer credentialing. Chief Wittwer then introduced and gave the floor to the new EMS Chief Pat Songer. Chief Songer brought Paramedic Joseph Doidge forward to be recognized for his recent designation as a Certified Community Paramedic, adding to his many qualifications, including being a critical care paramedic. Captain Anderson made extraordinary efforts to successfully acquire a Fire house Subs grant of \$12,500 to purchase wildland radios. A wildland team is currently deployed to Nebraska.

Chief Wittwer reviewed the **call volume** with a total of 234 calls for the month with many overlapping calls. He also reviewed the **trainings** listed in his report, including swiftwater rescue, high angle rescue and a joint training with Bozeman Fire Department.

Fire Prevention was busy with a conference, smoke alarm installations, providing assistance with the budget process and final touches to the fleet services facility.

In the **EMS Division**, Chief Songer has just begun. CVFD will be applying for the SAMSHA Grant.

Chief Wittwer asked the **community** in attendance to take advantage of this evening to engage with the members of the department and the board after the meeting. CVFD continues to be involved in the community in many areas including community classes, presentations and participating in opening ceremonies for local events.

Continuing efforts are being made for accreditation for CVFD, revenue enhancement and working on the County wide EMS System.

In answer to a request from Trustee Blakeman, Chief Wittwer explained how the District is striving to help cover some of the costs of running the department by offering Fleet services to other departments, sending firefighters to other areas for wildland firefighting and adding interfacility transport services with the EMS Reserve Division. All of these services are paid for appropriately, but they each also fill important needs, serving our community and others.

LOCAL 4939 REPORT:

As Submitted. Captain Stephen McAdams presented the Local 4939 report confirming the membership's commitment to public safety and pride in the accomplishments of its members which benefit the community and fire district.

VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION REPORT:

As submitted. President of the Association, Firefighter Glenn Bradbury reported that the volunteer fire academy is working on the hands-on part of their training, just completing extrication and moving on to safety and survival. The graduation will be April 22nd at 6:00 pm. All are welcome to attend.

TRUSTEE REPORT:

Trustee Ramie Blakeman met with the Gallatin County Superintendent of Schools regarding **mill levy elections**. Some discoveries were that pre Covid Bozeman was adding 8 kindergarten classes each year. Post Covid additions have declined to 2 to 3 classes each year. It appears that the local birthrate has gone down considerably. The only residential increase that they have seen are families locating in the area with high school age children. Belgrade seems to not follow the decrease that Bozeman has seen. Trustee Blakeman also followed up to schedule a meeting of the trustees to hold a **strategic planning session**. The trustees agreed to meet on Friday, May 1st at Station 1 at 8:30 am for a Strategic Planning Session.

Trustee Ron Murray shared a personal story from the evening of March 13th when he required an Advance Life Support response from Central Valley Fire District, meeting the CVFD Medic in route to the hospital due to an anaphylactic reaction to medication. He expressed his appreciation for Paramedic Coulthard and for the people that make up the department and the actions that saved his life.

Trustee Rob Holt urged people to invite friends to the board meetings for CVFD as well as attending the City of Belgrade's Council Meetings to be aware of issues in our community.

Trustee MacLeod moved to approve **the reports**. Trustee Murray seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

FY27 Budget Presentation.

Chief Wittwer introduced **Financial Manager Samantha Honatke**. Financial Manager Honatke explained that the budget is being presented at this meeting to provide the trustees time for review it before the May meeting when the preliminary budget will be approved. She then introduced Fire Marshal Jake Zlomie to present the FY27 Preliminary Budget overview.

Fire Marshal Zlomie went through the PowerPoint presentation. He reviewed the CBA bargaining schedule and cash flow. He then went over **accomplishments**: an EMS Division Chief has been hired, the Fleet Services Facility has been completed, Station 4 water supply and bathroom upgrades are completed, a Type III Wildland Engine has been acquired and a Heavy Rescue Vehicle has been ordered. The District's website has migrated to a new vendor and EMS and Wildland Divisions have been established to improve services. FM Zlomie reviewed Reserve Funds and District Liabilities and the sources of District revenues. He went over FY27 staffing which is projected to remain unchanged. For the FY27 Budget, to be conservative, tax revenue is assumed to have no increase after reviewing past funding. Non-tax revenue forecasts assume a 77.6% increase. Fire Marshal Zlomie then reviewed Capital projects. Projects for apparatus include three ambulances and a Utility/Rescue Pickup. Projects for facilities include Station 1 HVAC system; Station 3 boiler replacement and additional bedroom; Station 5, water storage. Projects for equipment include PPE and thermal imaging cameras; wildland radios and equipment; telehandler; technical rescue equipment. The presentation ended with the budget and revenue schedule for the District. Some discussion followed, clarifying that the expense for the wildland radios will be covered by the Firehouse Sub Grant and reviewing the differences between operational and capital

funds. Funding from the Capital Mill Levy may only be used for capital purchases.

ACTION ITEMS:

Approval of Updated Board Governance and Meeting Policy Document.

Trustee Holt moved to approve the **Board Governance and Meeting Policy Document**. Trustee MacLeod seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

There will be a **strategic planning meeting of the CVFD Board of Trustees on May 1st at 8:30 am** at Station 1. The next regular meeting of the Central Valley Fire District Board of Trustees is scheduled for **May 12, 2026**.

PRESENTATION:

Office Manager Bloem read from a plaque presented to **Chairman Darren Wilkins** in appreciation of his service as a trustee for the Central Valley Fire District. Fire Chief Wittwer added appreciation for two and a half years of steady counsel in their meetings together and his leadership and service to the District.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.



Ron Murray Chairman



Mark MacLeod, Secretary/Treasurer

ATTEST: 

Debbie Bloem, Clerk