REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
DE BEQUE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

DE BEQUE FIRE STATION
MAY 12, 2025

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:
Pursuant to notice, the regular board meeting of the De Beque Fire Protection District (the District) was called to order by Board President Tanner at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, May 12, 2025.

OPEN WITH PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL/ESTABLISH QUORUM:
Cynthia Farris, Absent; Melanie Hansen, Present; Dustin Koehler, Absent; Maria Ramthun, Present; Annette Tanner, Present. A quorum was present and the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed.

OTHERS PRESENT:
Dick (John R.) Latham; Mike Tanner; Forest Matis, De Beque District Fire Chief; Lieutenant Triston Quigley; Secretary Kim Latham.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA:
No Additions or deletions to the Agenda were made. Motion was made by Board Secretary Hansen and seconded by Board Vice-President Ramthun to approve the agenda as presented. Vote: Cynthia Farris, Absent; Melanie Hansen, Aye; Dustin Koehler, Absent; Maria Ramthun, Aye; Annette Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.

MINUTES:
Minutes were presented to the BOD for consideration for the regular board meeting of April 14, 2025. Motion was made by Board President Tanner and seconded by Board Secretary Hansen to approve the minutes for April 14, 2025 with one correction. Vote: Cynthia Farris, Absent; Melanie Hansen, Aye; Dustin Koehler, Absent; Maria Ramthun, Aye; Annette Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.

FINANCE REPORTS
Financial Reports were presented to the BOD for March 2025 and YTD through March 2025. Motion was made by Board Vice-President Ramthun and seconded by Board President Tanner to approve the finance reports for March 2025 and YTD through March 2025 as presented. Vote: Cynthia Farris, Absent; Melanie Hansen, Aye; Dustin Koehler, Absent; Maria Ramthun, Aye; Annette Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.

Insurance Write-Downs/Write Offs in the amount of $1,166.52 for March 2025 were presented to the board. Motion was made by Board Vice-President Ramthun and seconded by Board Secretary Hansen to approve the insurance adjustment write-down/write-offs in the amount of $1,166.52.00 for March 2025. Vote: Cynthia Farris, Absent; Melanie Hansen, Aye; Dustin Koehler, Absent; Maria Ramthun, Aye; Annette Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.

BOARD OF DIRECTOR CHANGES:

1) Swearing in of new Board of Director members. Three Board of Director positions were subject to election on May 6, 2025. Three nomination forms were turned in for the three open board member positions, resulting in the District Election Official, Ms. Sue Blair of Community Resources Services of Colorado, declaring the three applicants as elected to the DFPD Board of Director positions. Board Vice-President Maria Ramthun, Dick Latham, and Mike Tanner were sworn in with Oaths of Office to accept the open Board of Director positions and were given Certifications of Duty certificates.
2) Election of New Board of Director Officers.
    a. Board Member Latham nominated and Board Member Ramthun seconded Mike Tanner for the Board President position. Vote: Board Member Farris, Absent; Board Member Koehler, Absent; Board Member Latham, Aye; Board Member Ramthun, Aye; Board Member Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.
    b. Board Member Latham nominated and Board Member Ramthun seconded Dusty Koehler for the Board Vice-President position. Vote: Board Member Farris, Absent; Board Member Koehler, Absent; Board Member Latham, Aye; Board Member Ramthun, Aye; Board Member Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.
    c. Board President Tanner nominated and Board Member Latham seconded Maria Ramthun for the Board Secretary position. Vote: Board Member Farris, Absent; Board Member Koehler, Absent; Board Member Latham, Aye; Board Member Ramthun, Aye; Board Member Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.
3) Thank you to the outgoing Board Members Annette Tanner and Melanie Hansen were expressed for their years of service on the DFPD Board of Directors.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

1) Cyber Terrorism Attacks/Security Measures Update. The issue is still being investigated and there is still the possibility of some compensation for the lost funds, but there is no new update on the outcome yet.
2) Ladder Truck Update. The Ladder 81 truck has been returned from getting repaired, it has been delivered to the Fire District in Meeker, and we have a check in hand for the sale of the truck.
3) Deployment Update. Fire assignments are generally on an on-call basis. We get a call, we respond, then we come back. This year, however, we have been tagged to go out as of June 1, 2025 and work two-week shifts. We will fly relief employees out every two weeks and bring crews back every two weeks for the duration of the fire season.

NEW BUSINESS:

1) Set Billing Rate for Ambulance Runs. The County (Mesa) no longer sets EMS billing rates; each Districts now must set their EMS ambulance run rates each year. Chief Matis presented information regarding the current rates, the estimated amount of write downs on EMS runs, and the feasibility of raising EMS rates for the remainder of 2025. Discussion ensued. The Board asked Chief Matis/Secretary Latham to check with the District attorney to see whether or not it is allowable to give a discount to self-pay non-insurance patients. Motion was made by Board President Tanner and seconded by Board Secretary Ramthun to raise the EMS ambulance run rates by 10% (rounded). Vote: Board Member Farris, Absent; Board Member Koehler, Absent;

Board Member Latham, Aye; Board Member Ramthun, Aye; Board Member Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.

2) One Billing Solutions Proposal. There have been quite a few issues with the current EMS billing company. Secretary Latham received a proposal from One Billing Solutions as an option to move toward. The Board directed Secretary Latham to do further research into EMS billing companies.

3) Air Compressor Filtration.
    a. Our SCBA fill station failed testing again. It is getting condensation in the tanks and is unserviceable, so it has been put out of service as it is unsafe to use. The teams currently have to go to the PV or GV fire stations to get bottles filled, which is working for a stop-gap solution, but replacing the unit would be the preferable way to go for a long-term solution. Grant opportunities for funding to replace it have been considered. The government is not issuing this type of grant at this time, but there is an outside chance we could get a grant (or partial grant) from Rocky Mountain Health Plans. The Chief has received a reasonable quote of about $48,000 for a two-bottle fill station, the cost of which would come out of unexpected capital expenditures in the budget, or the District can wait to see if funding through a grant from RMHP is possible.
    b. The Chief also presented a need for a new squad truck. The remaining squad truck has been a good truck, but it is worn out, repairs are constant, and its size is not big enough to haul rope and swift water equipment. The Chief gave an estimate of about $80,000 for a new squad truck.
    c. We have received $250,000 that is not included in the budget for the sale of the Ladder truck; we also purchased a new Rescue truck for $300,000 that was not included in the budget, but which is also going to be used and reimbursed by wildland fire assignments.
4) The Board discussed the District finances, the amount of money that has been set aside for apparatus purchases, which needs are most immediate, and that we also need to look at ordering a new ambulance that is in the budget this year. The Board instructed the Chief to look into the purchase of a new squad truck and ordering a new ambulance. Captain Quigly voiced the opinion that the District is good for now on utilizing PV and GV fire districts for bottle filling, but noted that when we have to send crew members to those stations for fill purposes, it does leave the District short on personnel in the event of an EMS or fire call, which can be a safety issue. Captain Quigley suggested the District wait to see if the RMHP grant is available, but if it is not, he encouraged the Board to consider purchasing the unit for safety purposes. There is also the possibility of funding from the local gas companies toward the purchase. Motion was made by Board Secretary Ramthun and seconded by Board Member Latham to table the issue of purchasing a new SCBA fill station to the next BOD meeting. Vote: Board Member Farris, Absent; Board Member Koehler, Absent; Board Member Latham, Aye; Board Member Ramthun, Aye; Board Member Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

1) Chief Matis reported that most of his subjects have been addressed. He did attend a meeting in Garfield County with (Fire) Inspectors regarding fire codes. Garfield County is considering

adopting the 2024 Fire Codes, which would mean DFPD would also need to adopt the code. In addition, the state legislature is currently trying to pass legislation that would add Wildland Resiliency Code language to the Fire Codes, which addresses building codes. The bill would require each District in the state to pass it as well. The question is whether each county or district can amend things out of the code. Garfield County is taking the position that they will accept the new code set, but will amend things out that do not make sense, or which do not apply to our area. One area of contention is a requirement for all districts to go to private properties and inspect them every three years for things like tree growth. The legislation is designed to withhold funding to districts who do not adopt and comply with the language and mandates of the bill. The Chief does not know where Mesa County stands on this issue as of yet.

CREW UPDATES:

1) Already Covered.

OTHER COMMENTS:

BOARD COMMENTS: Board Member Latham requested a copy of the current budget.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made by Board Secretary Ramthun and seconded by Board Member Latham to adjourn the meeting. Vote: Board Member Farris, Absent; Board Member Koehler, Absent; Board Member Latham, Aye; Board Member Ramthun, Aye; Board Member Tanner, Aye. Motion Passed.
Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Next regular meeting: Monday, June 9, 2025.

Approved by the De Beque Fire Protection Board of Directors on June 9, 2025.

DeBeque Fire Protection District Established 2008

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Michael Tanner, President

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Maria (Rebecca) Ramthun, Secretary

Board of Directors:
Board President Michael Tanner
Board Vice President Dustin Koehler
Board Secretary Maria (Rebecca) Ramthun
Board Member Cynthia Farris
Board Member Dick (John R) Latham

It is noted that Board Member Cynthia Farris is also on the Board of Directors for the Town of De Beque. It is noted that the dual Board positions might be considered a conflict of interest in the event of interaction between the De Beque Fire Protection District and the Town of De Beque.