

Roaring Fork Fire Rescue Authority
1089 JW Drive
Carbondale, CO 81623
970.340.7040
roaringforkfire.org



SCOTT THOMPSON
FIRE CHIEF

Call to Order: Noting that a quorum was present, President Van Walraven called the meeting to order at 9:00 on February 20, 2024.

Roll Call: President Van Walraven, Vice President Arthur, Attorney Cole (Lifesize), Chief Thompson, Director Young, Treasurer Striegler, Board Member Duroux, Board Member Young, Executive Administrative Assistant Diamond, Human Resource Director Thomas, Deputy Chief Cornelius, Deputy Chief of Training Palmer (Lifesize), Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele, Deputy Fire Marshal Stott.

Approval of Minutes: Director Young motioned to accept the meeting minutes from January 16, 2024. Treasure Striegler seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion passed without opposition to accepting the January 16, 2024, minutes.

Attorney's Report: Attorney Cole advised he was working on the closing bond for Basalt and Rural Fire. Attorney Cole said he is also working on a property contract for the land purchase for Station 42. Attorney Cole advised he is helping review contracts for design and engineering to get the construction work underway at Station 42. Attorney Cole reported one of his key tasks moving forward would be working on the rent-to-own packages for RFFRA's future residential opportunities. QUESTIONS?

Board Member Young took this opportunity to tell Attorney Cole and the Board that he appreciates our legal advice. Board Member Young says we are grateful for the work you do for us; thank you. Chief Thompson added that his team does a great job turning contracts around for us when needed and does not go unappreciated; thank you.

Chiefs Report: Chief Thompson said he, Attorney Cole, and Dave Detwiler had been working on contracts for the general contractor for the architect. Chief Thompson told the Board that Javon is close to completing the land purchase contract for our five acres.

Chief Thompson said he is researching water rights and will consult a water attorney as they wanted to use ditch water for training. Chief Thompson said it does not look like this is possible, as the ditch water can only be used for agriculture. Chief Thompson will look into drilling a well or using domestic water in a tank for training and reusing that water.

Chief Thompson told the Board we got our expedited permit from Pitkin County and we start on our water tanks at Station 46 this week. Chief Thompson said he sent a letter to the homeowners in the area so they know what we are doing and why there is additional construction.

President Van Walraven asked if there was a disposition on who was responsible for the tank's failure. Chief Thompson said he and the Attorney have yet to start on it as he prioritized fixing the tanks first.

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Chief Thompson told the Board that in the fall, they were expecting a new tender in the first part of this year, which will be delayed till the fall of this year. Chief Thompson said the fire truck company had lost engineers, which is why the delay occurred. Chief Thompson said he attended a build meeting at BME and met with the company's owner and the production manager where the chassis is on site. Chief Thompson said he worked with the owner and the production manager to reuse a body they had already designed and engineered that was similar to our design. Chief Thompson said this truck should be ready before next fall, and they are not up-charging us for the chassis; they will give it to us at the contract price.

Chief Thompson said things are moving with Station 42 President Van Walraven and Board Member Duroux have been working on the extent process with Eagle County so we can start working toward the land use changes and building permits. Chief Thompson advised they want to do the maintenance facility first.

Chief Thompson said four designs for Station 42 were given to staff for comments. Chief Thompson said he received many comments and would incorporate those into a great plan. Chief Thompson talked about the specifics of the maintenance pad for the portable lift. Chief Thompson said they are meeting every week. Board Member Duroux added that the fire tower would be a modular unit, so it would go up quickly once delivered. Chief Thompson advised the Board that Division Chief Palmer is also working on this and will ensure we hit the top things that ISO requires to get the maximum points; this is one reason for building this. Treasurer Young asked if this would increase or decrease our ISO rating. Chief Thompson said they hope to get to an ISO rating of 2. Discussion ensued regarding ISO ratings.

Finance Report: Finance Director Thompson advised the Board that Audits are scheduled for the first week in March. Finance Director Thompson advised the Board that Valley View Hospital applied for nonprofit status in 2020 to be tax-exempt, and this exemption came through in October. Finance Director Thompson reported to the Board that all the income for Basalt in Eagle County for October, November, and December came in with negative amounts. Finance Director Thompson said going into this year, we were short on cash, but knowing we were due \$300,000 - \$400,000 with the tax increase, we could weather the storm. Finance Director Thompson said when the tax laws changed, they did not bill anybody on their property tax bill unit January 20th-30th. Finance Director Thompson said she did not take that into account. Finance Director Thompson said cash reserves in a separate bank will be used if needed. Finance Director Thompson advised the Eagle County Clerk said we will receive the bulk of our property taxes in March. Finance Director Thompson told the Board she expects one million dollars in February and about two to three million in March.

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Finance Director Thompson said our budget is right where it should be; we are now paying a 30% increase in everyone's salaries. Finance Director Thompson explains that a few line items are at 90% or closer: annual bills like insurance and other one-time payments.

Finance Director Thompson advised the Snowmass Board that Basalt had successfully closed the Bond and received \$26,046,266.16 of the tax-exempt portion and \$3,236,642.14 of the taxable portion. Finance Director Thompson said both accounts are with Colotrust's Plus account and receive 5.5% interest. Finance Director Thompson said she has also opened a local checking account to process accounts payable associated with the Bond. Finance Director Thompson anticipates the majority of the payments will be wired by staff. Finance Director Thompson advised for security, there are a few signers on staff for that account, and both President Van Walraven and Treasurer Young can log into the accounts anytime. Finance Director Thompson advised that she can look at a CD once we have a construction schedule and know when the draws will be. Finance Director Thompson advised that we have an emergency reserve with Colotrust and an old vehicle account in a Prime account and will move to the Plus account.

Finance Director Thompson advised the Board that three people qualified for the LOSAP program for Volunteers. Finance Director Thompson said the first two people are first-time recipients, so they will only receive a year's credit; they would be eligible for \$1,250 the next year, then \$2,500 each consecutive year they qualify. Finance Director Thompson told the Board the third person is eligible for the \$2,500. Finance Director Thompson asks the Board for a motion to approve the LOSAP Distribution list. Vice President Arthur motioned to approve the LOSAP Distribution list; Treasure Striegler seconded the motion, noting a change from \$25,000 to \$2,500 and a correction on the second name. All Board members were in favor of the changes and non-opposed.

Human Resources Report:

Human Resource Director Thomas shared the 2023 annual turnover report she was asked to provide to the Board. Human Resource Director Thomas' report showed a 9.47% turnover in 2023 for the collective overall of RFFR. President Van Walraven asked where we looked in comparison to the state. Human Resource Director Thomas said that data was not out yet. Vice President Arthur asked for the data to be broken down into different groupings vs. collective overall data so the Board could see where the turnover occurred. Human Resource Director Thomas said she would work on that.

Human Resource Director Thomas talked about the strategic plan initiatives. Human Resource Director Thomas said the career progression team is working on how to present that information to staff. Human Resource Director Thomas said she hopes to see a matrix on paper within a



month, explaining in detail to staff how career progression affects them and how to move forward.

Human Resource Director Thomas said the compensation team has changed everyone's compensation, and the team is finalizing their manual and training. Human Resource Director Thomas advised the team will do a training to present the salary and new step tables with the compensation manual. Human Resource Director Thomas said their goal is to present to shifts next week and then to admin the week after.

Human Resource Director Thomas advised the Board that the strategic plan employee recognition program is complete; the new plan has been implemented, and the Authority used the new program in our Annual Awards ceremony. Human Resource Director Thomas advised the Board that she has yet to receive any feedback on the process that was used.

Human Resource Director Thomas advised the process mapping team is still working on onboarding / off-boarding, advising they are at 40% complete.

Human Resource Director Thomas advised the Board, with the help of the Division Chief Training Officer Palmer, that they have completed bringing on the new people, eleven total, with rank changes and new hires. Human Resource Director Thomas advised that the volunteer board has been discussing a spring volunteer academy. Human Resource Director Thomas said she is also gearing up to hire for the Wildfire Severity Crew.

Human Resource Director Thomas advised the Board of the Youth Entity Program held at CMC Spring Valley campus on March 5. Human Resource Director Thomas said this program works with all the high schools in the valley, and they reach out to the valley's employees. Human Resource Director Thomas told the Board this program allows junior and senior students to start planning for the future; this program engages the employers and the students to talk, ask questions, and explore different career opportunities this valley offers. Human Resource Director Thomas said Roaring Fork Fire is set up with all government agencies where they partner with EMS and First Responder agencies in our area. Human Resource Director Thomas noted this group of people shares information with the students and brings something to engage them, like jaws of life tools. Chief Thompson advised the Board that this program was working as RFFRA had just hired its third graduate from our high school.

Fire Marshal's Report:

Deputy Fire Marshal Stott advised the Board that her team is following up on recent fires and those investigations. Deputy Fire Marshal Stott advised the Board the team is working with

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investigators from the insurance companies. Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele told the Board they contacted the Division of Fire Prevention and Control on one fire. Deputy Chief Fire Marshal

Mele told the Board this program has been extended to the Western Slope. Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele told the Board that they would send two qualified, certified investigators when you call the division and request assistance. Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele told the Board that this program has specialized investigators such as electric, arson, etc. Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele told the Board he liked how the investigators helped them versus taking over. Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele said this was a good learning experience. Deputy Chief Fire Marshal Mele told the Board this group of experts was free, and they want agencies to use their program while it's available. Deputy Fire Marshal Stott added that this group could help with wildland fires and provide training, mobile units, tip lines, videos, and takeover investigations if requested. Chief Thompson said that this resource is helpful to keep RFFRA out of Civil Court. Treasurer Striegler asked where the money for the program comes from. Deputy Fire Marshal Stott told her this state money came after the Marshall Fire to help rural towns with fire investigations. Deputy Fire Marshal Stott told the Board this program has nine investigators in this state, and two are on the Western side; they are also working on getting an arson dog. President Van Walraven asked if we could send a letter to someone in Congress to thank them for this program. Deputy Fire Marshal Stott suggested Mike Morgan and Deputy Chief Cornelius recommended Stan Hilkey.

Deputy Chief Richard Cornelius Report:

Deputy Chief Cornelius told the Board of two recent structure fires, one on the Frying Pan Rd; the fire review will be this evening. Deputy Chief Cornelius said the increased staffing helped, as well as the continued involvement of the significant incident response model. Deputy Chief Cornelius said resources from Carbondale Fire assisted them and placed Aspen Fire and Aspen Ambulance on Standby to cover the rest of the world's incidents; some of our members came into cover. Chief Thompson also told the Board that the Volunteers responded with an engine and three volunteer responders.

Deputy Chief Cornelius told the Board that the second structure fire in Snowmass Village would be reviewed at the officer meeting next week. Vice President Arthur was pleased to tell the Board how seamless the interface was with the command structure between Aspen Fire and

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Roaring Fork Fire Rescue. Deputy Chief Cornelius said the agencies in this valley have adopted structure fire operational guidelines. Deputy Chief Cornelius said he is working on an operational command guideline to reinforce these seamless incidents, which will be adopted by all the agencies in the incident command.

Deputy Chief Cornelius informed the Board of January Volunteer Hours: 173 total volunteer hours, 149 In-station hours, and 24 Responses from Home/Work.

Deputy Chief Cornelius informed the Board of Incidents for January 2024: 270 Total Incidents and 141 EMS-related incidents. Deputy Chief Cornelius compared this to January 2023: 270 Total Incidents, 129 EMS-related incidents; No increase.

Deputy Chief Cornelius advised the Board that Iturri has signed a letter of intent for a type III brush truck. Deputy Chief Cornelius said The Wildland Committee will travel to Creswell, OR, on February 26 for a pre-construction meeting. Deputy Chief Cornelius noted the first of three apparatuses is expected to be delivered within twelve months.

Deputy Chief Cornelius advised a final inspection for a new ambulance will take place at Braun Northwest on March 11. Deputy Chief Cornelius said delivery would follow shortly after. Deputy Chief Cornelius said we will also order another ambulance at the factory.

Deputy Chief Cornelius told the Board that orientation and onboarding started on January 15 and finished on February 9. Deputy Chief Cornelius thanked the Training Division and all members who have served as instructors throughout this important process. Deputy Chief Cornelius told the Board that the new team members, Firefighter/Paramedics Aaron Luttrell and Benito "Benny" Palestina, started on B and C Shifts, respectively, last week; Lieutenant Ryan Clark will transition to A Shift in the next few weeks. Deputy Chief Cornelius said Paramedic Peter Whitlock and Firefighter/Paramedic Crae Watkins completed an abbreviated orientation and onboarding; both transitioned to A and B Shifts this week.

Deputy Chief Cornelius told the Board that the Roaring Fork Valley Battalion Chiefs from Aspen to Glenwood Springs agencies meet quarterly. Deputy Chief Cornelius said we are excited to strengthen the working relationships and continue to work on standard operational guidelines. Deputy Chief Cornelius advised we have expanded the group to include Colorado River Fire Rescue and Grand Valley Fire Protection District. Deputy Chief Cornelius said the most recent meeting occurred in February and was hosted at Station 42. Deputy Chief Cornelius noted a review of a draft Incident Command operational guideline took place and should be adopted by

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participating agencies and published soon. Deputy Chief Cornelius said this will complement the previously published Structure Fire Operations operational guideline. Deputy Chief Cornelius advised we will bring the CDPFC and Mark Novak to our next meeting for a tabletop exercise on an emerging MAMA and WINS incident.

Deputy Chief Cornelius said the Optimum Staffing Administrative Guideline has been updated as of February 11, 2024, and now reflects a minimum staffing of 10. Deputy Chief Cornelius advised at minimum staffing, we have an ALS crew of two at Stations 41 and 42, a crew of 5 with two ALS providers at Station 45, and a Single Role Battalion Chief. Deputy Chief Cornelius thanked the Authority BOD for supporting the budget to increase staffing; this has proven very beneficial with recent critical incidents.

Deputy Chief Cornelius said Ethan Printy continues to do well in the Arapahoe Community College Paramedic Education Program and will finish on July 11, 2024. Deputy Chief Cornelius

advised both Marcus Gerbaz and Nick Braun are in the process of applying to paramedic education programs; it's anticipated they will start in either June or August and attend an accelerated six-month program. Deputy Chief Cornelius said we are preparing to send at least one full-time member in January 2025.

Deputy Chief Cornelius told the Board that as part of our process to complete a Community Risk Assessment and Standard of Cover, we are now a registered agency with the Center for Public Safety Excellence. Deputy Chief Cornelius said we hope to complete the CRA/SOC by summer 2024. Deputy Chief Cornelius informed the Board that he will attend a 3-day Quality Improvement for the Fire and Emergency Services Workshop in Boulder in April to understand the CRA/SOC process better. Questions: None

Deputy Chief Kevin Issel Report: Given by Chief Thompson:

Chief Thompson said that with our recent hires, we had two employee units available, and we were able to use two of the units as a recruitment tool and hire two paramedics. Chief Thompson told the Board that Deputy Chief Issel is working on three different grants: one for an EV charging at Station 42, the three brush units, and a solar system on the roof of the maintenance facility at Station 42. QUESTIONS: none.

Master Plan Discussion: none

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Public Comments: A question was asked saying Governor Polis did Wildfire mitigation last week and wanted to know if that would impact our community or if RFFRA would go for any grants out there. Chief Thompson said we hope, and he added we just got a new State Forester and an Assistant Forester working out of Rifle; we hope to grab some of those grants for staffing State Forest Service positions.

Board Comments: Treasurer Young commented on the work done for the Basalt Bond for Station 42; he spent more time in the Station than usual, and his observation is we will continue to grow, but it has its repercussions on staff. Director Young says we now have 30 million dollars to manage; construction will impact staff, and housing is growing again. Director Young feels like the Board keeps piling on more work for HR and Finance. Director Young thinks the housing needs more attention with turnover, leases, checking in and out of units when someone moves out, and maintenance; he wonders if they need more support. Chief Thompson told the Board that Deputy Chief Issel oversees all the maintenance in the fire stations and the 19 housing units. Chief Thompson told the Board that Deputy Chief Issel is our asset manager and has painters, contractors, electricians, appliance contractors, and maintenance people he uses for projects. Chief Thompson said Administrative Assistant Herwick does the checking in and out of units and calls for deep cleaning. Chief Thompson does not think the staff is overwhelmed in these areas but dialed in. Chief Thompson said about the leases, Finance Director Thompson deals with that paperwork. Finance Director Thompson told the Board that Executive Assistant Diamond is doing the leases. Chief Thompson reminds the Board that the Bond can only be used for brick and mortar. Chief Thompson said moving forward, he would like to see an HR Generalist work for Renee. Director Young was pleased with the Chief's comments and wants to ensure we keep this on the radar. President Van Walraven said this is good to think of at budget time. Human Resource Director Thomas said she is happy to do some research, but it is usually one HR person for one hundred staff. Human Resource Director Thomas said she would be interested in systems that track data instead of looking through files for information, as this takes much of her time. Vice President Arthur asked Human Resource Director Thomas if she had any ideas for programs that could be investigated to help her in the near future. Human Resource Director Thomas said she is connected with a significant HR Network but has yet to investigate what will work for her needs; she knows it needs to interface with Quick Books and Target Solutions. Treasurer Striegler added that it would be worthwhile to start looking at software as this Board likes data but does not want to tax Human Resource Director Thomas. Treasurer Striegler suggested that when the time comes, we may need to hire someone to input the data. Vice President Duroux tells the Board to be more cognizant when asking for something as it may take longer than we think to do a small task. Chief Thompson reminds the Board that Operations have grown, but the administration has not; it is time for admin to grow.

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Chief Thompson reminds the Board that Station 42 will eliminate the administration offices during construction. Chief Thompson said we will distribute our staff amongst 2-3 stations. Chief Thompson said they are still determining where the Basalt Board Meetings will be held. Chief Thompson told the Board we should wait to add staff until Station 42 is built. Finance Director Thompson and Human Resource Director Thomas were grateful the Board was looking out for them.

Staff Comments: Chief Thompson wants to shout out a big thank you to Deputy Chief of Training Palmer, Human Resource Director Thomas, Deputy Chief Cornelius, and the staff that helped bring on the new hires; he knows the work was stressful, but the work they did kept the shifts from doing credential training.

Human Resource Director Thomas told the Board that staff had done a fantastic job completing the annual employee performance evaluations.

New Business: None

Old Business: None

Volunteer Meeting: March 5 Treasurer Striegler will attend.

Executive Session (if needed): none

Non-Agenda Items: none

Adjournment: Vice President Arthur motioned to adjourn the meeting; Board Member Duroux seconded the motion, and no one was opposed. The meeting ended at 10:21 a.m.