



Divide Fire Protection District

**PO Box 941
103 Cedar Mountain Rd.
Divide, CO 80814**

**Phone: 719-687-8773
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Notice of Special Meeting

pursuant to CRS § 32-1-903(2):

The Divide Fire Protection District will hold a special meeting of the Board:

Date: Wednesday, October 15th, 2025

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: Shoemaker Station, 103 Cedar Mountain Road

AGENDA

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Review and Approve Agenda
- 3) Public Comment **
- 4) Review Draft Budget 2026
- 5) Adjournment

** Public comment is limited to no more than 5 minutes per person, 15 minutes maximum. Please indicate on the sign-in sheet that you wish to comment. Thank you.



DIVIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Board of Directors Meeting

Shoemaker Fire Station, 103 Cedar Mountain Road (Mail: PO Box 941), Divide Colorado, 80814
October 15th, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING

1. Call to Order / Role Call

Board President Lopez called to order the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Divide Fire Protection District (DFPD) at 6:00 p.m.

Secretary Franke called roll with the following present:

- Steed Lopez – President
- Robert Reynolds – Vice-President
- Patricia Franke – Secretary
- Peter Atwater – Treasurer (via Zoom)
- Dennis Luttrell – Director

Interim Chief Hinkle (present via Zoom) and District Administrator Diana Perkins were also present.

President Lopez addressed the public and the board with a reminder of appropriate conduct and how we conduct business as a public board.

Director Lopez addressed the following

- Reiterated that the budget being discussed is a draft and will be discussed and debated in public, undergoing several revisions before adoption.
- Discussed the requirements for budget timeline, where DOLA allows for a 01/31/2026 adoption date, 12/15/2025 is required for the certification of mil levy and 10/15/2025 is the statutory date for a proposed budget to be published for review.
- Documents being considered by a board in meeting cannot and will not be withheld from the public and we will make all board packet material available for immediate public consumption and review for transparent operations.
- Polling board members for alignment and discussion prior to meeting with "rubber stamping" votes in public is not permitted under open meeting laws and will not occur by this board.
- Discussions that may take place among full board outside of meeting are limited to those to discuss scheduling and building of an agenda.

- Social gatherings and public chance meetings which are not used to conduct formal board business are acceptable for multiple board members to be present.

Director Luttrell asked for clarification specifically around polling board members about specific line items in budget via email being a violation of open meeting laws. Director Lopez confirmed that is not acceptable and is in violation of the open meeting laws adding the following:

- Group emails are considered meetings, and board members must ask to be removed from correspondence to excuse them from participation in such meeting and are not acceptable for conversation per open meeting laws, and will not be how this board conducts business.

2. Review and Approve Agenda

Motion by Director Reynolds to add Pledge of Allegiance to agenda. Second by Director Luttrell. Motion passed unanimously. Motion to approve amended agenda by Director Luttrell, second by Director Franke.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Public Comment – Please see addendum for details.

5. Review Draft Budget 2026

Draft being reviewed is the same draft as what was presented at the 10/07 meeting. Director Atwater indicated that he was wanting to obtain email alignment on reserve levels to be able to update the draft for review this evening but did not receive responses.

Director Atwater made a motion to set a reserve of \$400,000. The district administrator asked if we were considering payroll as a factor in reserve levels. Director Franke began discussion with concern about approaching the budget with an intention to spend down to a specific amount rather than evaluating the need and appropriateness of spend.

Director Luttrell asked again if this is an attempt to “rubber stamp” a \$400,000 reserve level which was polled via email. President Lopez insisted that there is no and will be no “rubber stamping”. This is not adoption of anything, but is only a draft.

Director Luttrell call to order – we should not be having discussion without a second to initial motion, per Robert’s Rule of Order. Atwater motion was seconded by Reynolds for discussion to continue.

Director Franke continued that she would like the board to review the budget buckets and understand each one and the necessary spending, and how that corresponds to department directional goals and then upon obtaining a bottom line based on required and appropriate spending, evaluate if cuts were required to ensure adequate reserves are maintained.

Director Luttrell expressed that he would like to see the budget with an established game plan, then budget to accomplish and the reserve will land wherever it lands. Director Atwater amended his motion to budget to a minimum reserve of \$400,000. Second by Director Reynolds.

President Lopez called to vote on the motion, the motion did not pass (2 for, 2 against, 1 abstain)

- Directors Atwater and Reynolds in favor
- Directors Luttrell and Franke against
- Director Lopez abstained.

Motion by Director Franke to amend the grounds and building to reflect the 2025 actual spend, and remove all dollars from apparatus until it could be reviewed against the strategic plan for confirmation of alignment. Second by Director Luttrell.

Director Atwater requested we consider specifically stating that we would adjust the reserve to account for the money removed from the other line items. Director Lopez asked if anyone had brought the approved 2025 budget to the meeting. Director Franke indicated that she was under the impression that the "2025 budgeted" column on the proposal, was in fact the approved budget lines from 2025, as labeled. The district administrator confirmed that the numbers in the column labeled 2025 budgeted were the approved 2025 amounts.

Director Lopez repeated the question asking if anyone had brought the actual approved budget to the meeting, and requested that personnel come prepared for the next discussion.

Director Franke amended the portion on the floor to bring the grounds and building to 2025 actual spend, and eliminate budgeted dollars for apparatus/vehicle replacement pending review against a strategic plan for confirmation of alignment, and moving those dollars to place in capital reserve. Second by Director Luttrell.

Director Atwater expressed that he does not think we should make large adjustments to the budget throughout this process, and we should have a key driver to spend the reserve down.

Director Lopez called the motion to a vote. The motion passed 4 to 1

- Directors Franke, Reynolds, Luttrell, Lopez in Favor
- Director Atwater opposed.

Director Atwater added a dissent statement that he feels it is disingenuous to make this draft public without more spending in these areas because we will be spending in these areas. Director Lopez reiterating this is a draft state and changes, even possibly significant are to be expected through the process which will be openly discussed in public. Director Luttrell expressed gratitude for Director Lopez's clarification on this matter.

Chief Hinkle made a statement that as we are coming in at the end of the budget year, he would like to make additional purchases of extrication equipment. Director Franke asked if that was as 2025 or 2026 spend – no clear answer was given. No motion was made to formally discuss in this meeting.

Director Atwater expressed that he would not be able to make the approved amendments to the budget with the allowed time for publication. Director Franke made motion to allow the district administrator to formally update the budget, as discussed and approved in earlier motion along with any necessary formatting updates to meet publication requirements. Director Luttrell seconded the motion.

Director Lopez called the motion to vote. The motion passed unanimously with all board members participating in the vote.

Director Franke indicated that she is not comfortable approving spending without reviewing to a directional plan being considered to ensure transparency and interest of taxpayers through alignment.

Director Atwater reiterating his discomfort with posting this budget, warning the board to be prepared for substantial feedback, because he believes this is not in the best interest of the tax payers.

District Administrator responded that the reserve level is not increasing substantially, based on other spend. Director Atwater indicated that is good and better.

Director Lopez restated his request to bring all necessary references to the next meeting. Director Franke motioned to adjourn, second by Director Luttrell. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Adjournment

Motion by Director Franke to adjourn the meeting. Second by Director Luttrell. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m. The next regular meeting will take place on Tuesday, November 4th, 2025, at 6 p.m.

APPROVAL

We attest that the foregoing minutes, which have been approved by the affirmative majority vote of the Board of Directors of the Divide Fire Protection District, are a true and accurate record of the meeting held on the date stated above.

P. Franke
Name and Title

[Signature]
Name and Title

11 / 04 / 2025
Date

11 / 04 / 2025
Date

Addendum - Notes from Public Comment:

Tom O'Connor –

Tom expressed concerns regarding the transparency of the board. He also has concerns regarding operations and the budget, and intent to use the mil levy in ways different from proposal to the community via proposition 6A (which was voted on). Specifically 6A did not promise large staffing levels as the primary use of the mil and the current budget draft shows substantial funds (>50% of budget going to paying personnel). Noting that excessive payroll takes away from dollars for innovation and advancement of the district to provide better and more reliable services to the community. He also expressed concern about responsibly budgeting without a 5-year plan.

Mr. O'Connor also expressed that he had heard from a representative of another fire district that he toured our facility with Chief Hinkle and President Lopez to look at trucks from the DFPD fleet that are being considered for sale, including Rescue 21, a Brush Truck and a Tender. He expressed concerns with the impact this would have on the ability to manage wildland incidents which are the largest threat to our community as well as any potential impact it could have on ISO rating by limiting the amount of water on hand and available.

Mr. O'Connor expressed that proposition 6A, which was used to obtain the mil levy increase specifically indicated use for a full-time paid chief, which we do not currently have and he was unaware of timing and plans for replacement, stating that Chief Hinkle is unable to be present on a full time basis due to other commitments.

Response –

Chief Hinkle responded to concerns about command in his absence, indicating he had a deputy chief in place (James Wells) to act in chief's absence. He also stated there is an intention to place a brush truck up for bid to obtain money and space for a type III engine.

Director Lopez spoke to the timing of the new chief search which was discussed during previous meeting (10/07). He also reiterated that the previous board had, in fact adopted a 5-year plan that was drafted by Chief McLeod, and this board would be utilizing that as the basis for budgeting until such time as a new strategic plan is developed. He indicated that there are rumor mills and inaccuracies regarding Mr. O'Connor's third-party knowledge of truck sale discussions, and any such walk throughs and discussions he was involved in were not as a representative of the board.

Director Franke thanked Mr. O'Connor for sharing his concerns, specifically regarding the transparency of the board and truck replacement plans. She expressed that she was unaware of plans to sell additional apparatus as it had not been discussed in previous meetings of this board so she was surprised to hear that such walk throughs were being conducted.

Mr. O'Connor thanked the board for the response, and reiterated that a paid FT chief was part of our community commitment to have a strong leadership presence, and he is happy to hear that the board takes that seriously and has a timeline and plan to begin a formal search for a FT chief.

DIVIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
2025 Budget
Adopted and Certified

Budget Year	2025 Budget	Initial Draft	2026 Budget not adjusted yet	
Beginning Fund Balances				
Unreserved General Funds	644,000.00		644,000.00	
Unreserved Volunteer Funds	0.00		0.00	
Petty Cash Funds	0.00		0.00	
Tabor Reserve	16,000.00		16,000.00	
Total Beginning Fund Balances	660,000.00	794,630.00	660,000.00	
Revenues				
4310 - Net General Property Tax	911,312.00	950,000.00	971,499.00	Historical trend
4311 - Legislative Backfill				
4312 - Interest County Treasurer	350.00	350.00	350.00	
4315 - Specific Ownership Tax	55,000.00	55,000.00	55,000.00	
4325 - Teller County EMS/VFA Grants	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	
4330 - State Gaming and DOLA Grants	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	
4331 - EMTS Grant	0.00		0.00	
4340 - Special Incident Revenue				
4341- DFPD Vehicles	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	
4342-Personnel and Travel	30,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	
4344 - Cost Recovery	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	
4345 - Interest Income	20,000.00	22,000.00	22,000.00	
4360 - Donations	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	
4365 - Sales of Assets	0.00			
4370 - Plan Review Revenue	100.00			
4397 - Other Grant Income	0.00			
4399 - Miscellaneous Revenue	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	
Total Revenues	1,068,762.00	1,094,350.00	1,115,849.00	
Total Funds & Revenues	1,728,762.00	1,888,980.00	1,775,849.00	
Expenditures				
Administrative Expenses				
5401 - Payroll Tax Expenses	15,002.42	33,305.00	15,002.42	See assumption below re: Payroll Employees
Payroll Expense		500.00		
5405 - Payroll - District Employees	319,190.00	423,270.00	319,190.00	Assumes FT Chief starting in July, 1 FT Captain, 2 FT Firefighters, 6 PT Firefighters at 10 hours/week
5407 - Payroll - Incident Response	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	
5408 - Payroll - Volunteer Stipends	10,000.00	5,000.00	10,000.00	
5409 - Employee Benefits	106,974.00	70,850.00	106,290.00	Increase monthly stipend by 20%
5415 - County Treasurer Fee	27,500.00	27,500.00	27,500.00	
5420 - Director's Fees	12,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	
5427 - Volunteer Recruitment Retention	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	
5430 - Employee & Volunteer Screening	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	
5435 - Employee Recruitment Retention	6,700.00	5,000.00	6,700.00	~2 meetings/month
5440 - Subscriptions & Data	28,132.00	35,000.00	28,132.00	UpWorx proposal accepted
5445 - Office Supplies/Expenses	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	
5450 - Annual Audit	12,000.00	10,000.00	12,000.00	Cost comparable to 2025
5460 - Legal Fees	7,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	Cost comparable to 2025
5462 - Election Costs	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	Not an election year?
5465 - Public Relations	10,000.00	2,000.00	10,000.00	Cost comparable to 2025 actual
5475 - Notice Publication , etc.	400.00	400.00	400.00	
5480 - Insurance	44,097.25	48,506.00	44,097.25	Assume 10% increase
5490 - Pension Plan	12,000.00	42,180.00	12,000.00	See assumption above re: Payroll Employees
5495 - Volunteer Expenses	20,000.00	10,000.00	20,000.00	
5499 - Administrative Contingency	20,000.00	10,000.00	20,000.00	
Total Administrative Expenses	695,995.67	778,511.00	691,311.67	
Operating Expenses				
5505 - Training	35,000.00	40,000.00	35,000.00	
5510 - Building/Ground Supplies	14,100.00	20,000.00	14,100.00	
5520 - Propane-Natural Gas	5,000.00	6,000.00	5,000.00	
5525 - Electric	3,600.00	4,000.00	3,600.00	
5535 - Medical Supplies & Fees	9,000.00	12,000.00	9,000.00	2025 Lucas Purchase
5540 - Fire Fighting Supplies	22,330.00	15,000.00	22,330.00	
5541 - Fire Fighting R/M	9,100.00	5,000.00	9,100.00	

DIVIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
2025 Budget
Adopted and Certified

Budget Year	2025 Budget	Initial	2026 Budget
5543 - Rescue Supplies & Expense	2,000.00	3,000.00	2,000.00
5545 - Vehicle Supplies & Fuel	16,500.00	16,000.00	16,500.00
5546 - Vehicle R/M	25,500.00	50,000.00	25,500.00
5560 - Comm. Supplies & Repairs	13,000.00	5,000.00	13,000.00
5570 - Safety-Uniforms & Equipment	8,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00
5581 - Incident Expenses - Non-Reimb	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00
5582 - Incident Expenses - Reimbursable	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
5599 - Operational Contingency	30,000.00	20,000.00	30,000.00
Total Operating Expenses	200,130.00	211,000.00	200,130.00
Capital Expenses			
5606 - Capital Reserve-Bldg & Veh	660,000.00	0.00	660,000.00
5610 - Building & Grounds	12,200.00	500,000.00	12,200.00
5620 - Incident Vehicle Reserve	25,000.00		25,000.00
5625 - Capital Equipment	32,000.00	150,000.00	32,000.00
5657 - Vehicle/Apparatus Purchase	0.00	150,000.00	0.00
5655 - Vehicle Lease Payments	55,535.65	55,535.00	55,535.65
5699 - Capital Contingency	30,000.00	10,000.00	30,000.00
Total Capital Expenses	814,735.65	865,535.00	814,735.65
Total Expenses	1,710,861.32	1,855,046.00	1,706,177.32
Net Revenue - Inclusive of Fund Balances	17,900.68	33,934.00	69,671.68
Ending Fund Balances	17,900.68	33,934.00	69,671.68

Placeholder: Demo existing kitchen and gym, new buildout - likely multiyear project and potentially partially financed to preserve reserve levels above \$200-300,000. Showing as cash outlay 100% in 2026 which is unlikely.

Extrication equipment purchase
 New Type 3 (Netco E71?)

E21

I, Aristeed Lopez, certify that the attached is a true and accurate copy of the adopted 2025 budget of the Divide Fire Protection District.

 Aristeed Lopez
 President
 Divide Fire Protection District

Table 1

Income	2025 Plan	2025 Forecast	2026 Proposed	Assumptions
Property Tax	911312	935000	950000	Historical trend
Interest County	350	350	350	
Ownership Tax	55000	55000	55000	
TC EMS VFA Grant	2500	0	2500	
State Gaming Grant	15000	15000	15000	
Spec Inc Veh	10000	0	10000	
Spec Inc Person	30000	13177	15000	
Cost Recovery	2000	2000	2000	
Interest Income	20000	22000	22000	
Donations	20000	26000	20000	
Plan Review	100	0	0	
Misc Revenue	2500	4000	2500	
Reserves	660000	660000	794630	
Total Income and Reserves	1728762	1732527	1888980	
Admin Expenses				
Payroll Tax	15002	15002	33305	See assumption below re: Payroll Employees
Payroll Expense	0	422	500	
Payroll Emp	319190	314020	423270	Assumes FT Chief starting in July, 1 FT Captain, 2 FT Firefighters, 6 PT Firefighters at 10 hours/week
Payroll Inc Resp	30000	1057	30000	
Vol Stipend	10000	4750	5000	
Emp Benefits	106974	100374	70850	Increase monthly stipend by 20%
Treasurer Fee	27500	27500	27500	
Directors Fees	12000	10200	8000	<2 meetings/month
Volunteer Retention	4000	4000	4000	
EE/Vol Screening	1000	1000	1000	
EE Recruitment	6700	6700	5000	
Subscriptions/Data	28132	33000	35000	UpWorx proposal accepted
Office Supplies	5000	5000	5000	
Annual Audit	12000	9500	10000	Cost comparable to 2025
Legal Fees	7000	7000	7000	Cost comparable to 2025
Election Costs	5000	4549	0	Not an election year?
Public Relations	10000	1071	2000	Cost comparable to 2025 actual
Notices/Publications	400	0	400	
Insurance	44097	44097	48506	Assume 10% increase
Pension Plan	12000	12000	42180	See assumption above re: Payroll Employees
Volunteer Expenses	20000	10000	10000	
Admin Contingency	20000	0	10000	
Total Admin Expenses	695995	611242	778511	
Operating Expenses				
Training	35000	30000	40000	
Building/Grounds	14100	20000	20000	
Propane/Nat Gas	5000	5000	6000	

Electric	3600	3600	4000	
Medical Supplies	9000	27000	12000	2025 Lucas Purchase
Fire Fighting Supplies	22330	15000	15000	
Fire Repairs/Maint	9100	3000	5000	
Rescue Supplies	2000	2000	3000	
Vehicle Supplies and Fuel	16500	12000	16000	
Vehicle Repairs/Maint	25500	40000	50000	
Comms Supplies	13000	2000	5000	
Safety Supplies (Uniforms)	8000	4000	8000	
Incident Exp (non-reimb)	4000	0	4000	
Incident Exp (reimb)	3000	0	3000	
Operational Contingency	30000	0	20000	
Total Operating Expenses	200130	163600	211000	
Capital Expenses				
Capital Reserve	660000	660000	794630	
Building and Grounds	12200	35000	500000	Placeholder: Demo existing kitchen and gym, new buildout - likely multiyear project and potentially partially financed to preserve reserve levels above \$200-300,000. Showing as cash outlay 100% in 2026 which is unlikely.
Incident Vehicle Reserve	25000	0	0	
Capital Equipment	32000	0	150000	Extrication equipment purchase
Vehicle Lease Payments	55535	55535	55535	E21
Vehicle/Apparatus Purchases	0	72520	150000	New Type 3 (Netco E71?)
Capital Contingency	30000	0	10000	
Total Capital	814735	823055	1660165	
Total Expense	1710860	1597897	2649676	
Net Profit/Loss	17902	134630	-760696	Reserve 12/31/26 would be \$33,934

