

**Ridgway Fire Protection District
Regular Meeting
January 20, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Meeting called to order at 5:04 PM by Board Chair Christen Williams at the Ridgway Fire Department, located at 251 N. Railroad Street, Ridgway, Colorado. Also in attendance were Board Members Adam Johnson, Terry Schuyler, and Jamie Gomez, along with District Administrator Katy LaSala, Chief Miller, Captain Bumper Williams, and Ouray County Plaindealer reporter Lia Salvatierra.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA INCLUDING ADDITIONS & DELETIONS

Chief Miller inquired about the San Miguel Power new rate structure. Williams suggested inviting SMPA for a free consultation. LaSala will contact SMPA to request an analysis of new rates moving forward.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- ❖ MOTION by Johnson to approve the December 16, 2024 minutes as presented. SECOND by Gomez. ALL IN FAVOR.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT

- ❖ MOTION by Gomez to approve financials as presented. SECOND by Johnson. ALL IN FAVOR.

Closing CSB CD 3037 and Opening a Higher Interest Account

LaSala proposed closing the Citizen's State Bank (CSB) CD 3037 (\$133,099, 0.3% interest) and reinvesting it in:

1. A 6-month CD at 3% interest (penalties for early withdrawals)
2. Money Market account at 2.47% (no penalties for withdrawals)

- ❖ MOTION by Gomez to close the CSB CD 3037 and transfer the balance to a new 6-month CD at a 3% interest rate. SECOND by Johnson. ALL IN FAVOR.

OLD BUSINESS

Board Update on Chief's Evaluation Document

Chief Miller reported that Chris Bolane has polled area chiefs on evaluation methods. Williams stated that she has compiled evaluation questions and reviewed resources from Indeed. Her goals include performance measures, past accomplishments, and areas for improvement. Johnson will provide evaluation documentation from Carbondale Fire Department for comparison. Williams would like the target for completion to be March 2025. No action was taken at this time.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Miller reported that most of the recent calls involved OCEMS assistance, with positive OCEMS feedback. The officers and a few firefighters will attend fire training in St. George this upcoming weekend, with Ridgway covering travel and Ouray covering housing. The training tower assembly is nearly complete with the expected operational date of April 2025.

Gomez inquired into a Lexipol policy update. Chief Miller stated that he is currently focusing on wildland bylaws and waiting on an authority model before rewriting policies so as not to have to write a full set of policies twice. He reiterated that the Fire Department does have bylaws, although they are outdated, that all the firefighters comply with.

NEW BUSINESS

Appointment of the 2025 Designated Election Official

- ❖ MOTION by Johnson to appoint Katy LaSala as the Designated Election Official for the 2025 Special District Election season. SECOND by Schuyler. ALL IN FAVOR.

Designation of Public Meetings Posting Location

- ❖ MOTION by Gomez to post all Ridgway Fire Protection District Board Agendas on the district website with at least 24 hours' notice before meetings. SECOND by Johnson. ALL IN FAVOR.

Quarterly Newsletter Implementation

Williams suggested that the board members contribute to a 1-2 page document. The first edition is targeted for March 2025. Per Board discussion, content will include training updates, volunteer recruitment, recent calls, board elections, and any other recent and pertinent information. While the Distribution method was not solidified: Mail, email, and digital platforms were all suggested with Williams suggesting to publish via mail on the last quarter and Gomez suggesting publishing via mail on the first quarter as to as constituents to sign up for our quarterly newsletter. LaSala will inquire with the County for constituent email addresses and a current mailing list.

Volunteer Deterioration and Budget Constraints

Chief Miller and the Board highlighted the many challenges in maintaining volunteer service levels. Key concerns as illustrated by all in attendance include:

- volunteers struggle with availability due to job constraints
- the hiring of career firefighters has reduced volunteer participation

Chief Miller noted that one of the goals for hiring career firefighters was to take some of the pressure off the volunteers. However, that goal has seemed to work “too well” as the volunteer response has plummeted. Yet, Response times have improved, which was also a very important goal. No action was taken at this time.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

❖ MOTION by Johnson to adjourn. SECOND by Gomez. ALL IN FAVOR.

Meeting adjourned at 6:21 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

-Katy LaSala

Next meeting to be held on February 17, 2025.