

Ridgway Fire Protection District

Regular Meeting Minutes

November 17, 2025

Upstairs Common Room, Ridgway Firehouse, 251 N Railroad St.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

The regular meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM by Board Chair Christen Williams. Board members present included Christen Williams, Jamie Gomez, Terry Schuyler, and Adam Johnson. Also present were Katy LaSala (District Administrator), Bo Nerlin (Legal Counsel), Chris Miller (Fire Chief), and Chris Bolane (ex officio).

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

LaSala and Miller noted that producing full printed packets is time-consuming, and board members now have complete digital access.

Action: The Board agreed printed packets may omit lengthy backup sections going forward.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

❖ Motion by Johnson to approve the 10/20/25 minutes as presented; second by Schuyler. ALL IN FAVOR.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT

The Board reviewed the September financial report. LaSala reported that DFPC reimbursements continue to process, with an approximately \$80,000 payment expected soon, along with several additional reimbursements totaling nearly \$150,000. No major repairs occurred during the month.

❖ Motion by Schuyler to approve the financial report; second by Johnson. ALL IN FAVOR.

OLD BUSINESS

2026 Budget Discussion

The Board continued discussion of the proposed 2026 budget, focusing on replacement of the District's aging ladder truck. Chief Miller explained that the existing ladder truck has a major hydraulic leak and is no longer safe for aerial operations. Repair costs would exceed the value of the truck. Replacement options include used ladder trucks ranging from \$60,000–\$120,000, potential lease-purchase financing, or reallocating existing Wildland funds. The Board agreed to maintain the current draft budget and revisit funding options in December or early 2026 once financing information is available.

Wildland & District Administrator Role Proposals

The Board discussed the Wildland Coordinator position and the shared District Administrator arrangement with Ouray County EMS under a developing MOU. Under the draft structure, the District Administrator would be a full-time RFPD employee whose hours are shared with OCEMS, averaging approximately 10-15 hours per week billed to the County. Health insurance costs would be split evenly. The Board also discussed the need for a dedicated administrative office, with interest in converting the former Verizon equipment room into workspace for administrative staff. These roles remain included in the draft 2026 budget.

Authority Progress Update

Nerlin and Miller provided an update on development of a potential regional fire/EMS authority. Recent meetings included participation from Log Hill representatives, with increased interest noted. Work continues on the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) and bylaws, focusing on board structure, financial contributions, and operational expectations.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Miller reported that the ladder truck is formally out of service and will not return to aerial operation. Equipment salvage will occur before disposal. Miller also outlined training structure changes for 2026, including one captain-led training per month, four quarterly district-wide trainings, and a requirement that members take at least one 12-hour night shift each month to improve turnout.

Action: Williams requested that future written Chief's Reports include both a summary of the prior month's goals and identified goals for the coming month.

NEW BUSINESS

Request to Renovate the Prior Verizon Equipment Room into an Office

The Board discussed the feasibility of converting the former Verizon room into a dedicated administrative office. The space appears suitably sized, and members plan to tour it following the meeting.

Action: Williams directed Chief Miller to explore potential build-out needs and develop an estimated cost range for future consideration.

OTHER NON-AGENDA BUSINESS

Regional Battery System Training Requirement

Director Schuyler provided information about upcoming commercial-scale battery installations being planned regionally and the associated requirement that local fire districts participate in training regarding battery energy storage system hazards and microgrid operations.

Action: Per Chief Miller, the District will coordinate with project partners as plans progress for the Ridgway installation.

ADJOURNMENT

❖ Motion by Gomez to adjourn; second by Schuyler. ALL IN FAVOR.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM.

Next meeting: December 15, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,

-Katy LaSala, District Administrator