

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

West Metro Fire Protection District
Board of Directors Meeting
January 21, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the West Metro Fire Protection District board of directors was called to order by President Jerry Cassel at 6:00 p.m. This meeting was held in accordance with the applicable statutes of the state of Colorado, at West Metro Fire Protection District's Administrative Office Building, at 433 South Allison Parkway, Lakewood, Colorado, and available remotely via Teams.

II. ROLL CALL

President Jerry Cassel	Present
Vice President Bill Clayton	Present
Secretary Don Sherman	Present
Treasurer Carolyn Wolfrum	Present
Director Mike Feeley	Present
Director Amira Watters	Present
Director Mike Williams	Present

Also present were Fire Chief Don Lombardi; Deputy Chief Mike Kirkpatrick; Deputy Chief Jeremy Metz; Deputy Chief Dan Pfannenstiel; Ms. Adele Reester, Esq. (arrived at 6:22 p.m. remotely via Teams); Lieutenant Mike Mulcahy representing IAFF Local #1309; Mr. Bruk Mulaw; and, Ms. Jennifer Wheaton as recording secretary.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE

President Cassel led the Pledge of Allegiance and requested a moment of silence to honor all fallen firefighters.

IV. REVIEW OF MINUTES

MOTION: It was moved by Mike Williams and seconded by Carolyn Wolfrum to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the board of directors dated December 3, 2024, as presented. The motion was voted upon and carried.

V. PROMOTIONS

A. Promote Jacob Harris to the Rank of Lieutenant, and to Promote Lakota Beckhorn to the Rank of Lieutenant, Effective January 1, 2025 – Fire Chief Don Lombardi

MOTION: It was moved by Don Sherman and seconded by Amira Watters to Promote Jacob Harris to the Rank of Lieutenant, Effective January 1, 2025, and to Promote Lakota Beckhorn to the Rank of Lieutenant, Effective January 1, 2025. The motion was voted upon and carried.

VI. OATH OF OFFICE FOR LIEUTENANT JACOB HARRIS AND LIEUTENANT LAKOTA BECKHORN

RECESS

At approximately 6:10 p.m., President Cassel announced the board would take a 15-minute recess to congratulate the newly promoted employees and citizens, and would reconvene the regular meeting of the West Metro Fire Protection District Board of Directors at 6:25 p.m.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Karen Gordey of Lakewood, Colorado was present to speak for public comment, bringing questions to the board regarding fire and life safety in the community, hydrant testing, fire mitigation, and enforcement of fire bans. Chief Lombardi requested that Ms. Gordey email her questions to the recording secretary for the board so that the appropriate District personnel can address each question in detail.

VIII. REPORTS

A. Report of the Fire Chief – Fire Chief Don Lombardi

1. USAR Update

Chief Lombardi introduced Assistant Chief John Grothe to the board. With the pending retirement of Division Chief Bob Olme, Chief Grothe will be taking on the role of the program manager for Colorado Task Force One (CO-TF1).

CO-TF1 had the pleasure of hosting a group of firefighters and emergency managers from Istanbul, Turkey this morning. The group is in the U.S. on a three-week visit, with a focus on urban search and rescue. While with CO-TF1 representatives, the group talked about rescue strategies and teams. Turkey is subject to frequent earthquakes-some have been devastating. The country's geographical area is located almost entirely on fault lines, and thousands of earthquakes of various magnitudes happen each year. The group has already visited Washington, DC; Baltimore, and New York. After Denver, they will travel to San Francisco and then Miami before returning to their home country.

On February 4 and 5, 2025, CO-TF1 will be hosting the sponsoring agency chiefs meeting here in Denver. The meetings will consist of sponsoring agency chiefs and their respective program managers to discuss funding, and other topics affecting the task forces across the country.

2. Accreditation Update

a. 2024 Annual Program Appraisals

West Metro is in the process of preparing the 2024 Annual Program Appraisals, which is a look back on each area of the organization to review the past, present, and future of each program. West Metro has over 30 different programs that the District's leaders are currently evaluating through this process.

3. May 6, 2025 Board Member Election

The 2025 Board Member election is scheduled on May 6, 2025, from 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. West Metro has four seats up for election, each for four-year terms:

Director District 1 – Mr. Sherman's Seat

Director District 2 – Mr. Cassel's Seat – Term Limited

Director District 3 – Mr. Feeley's Seat – Term Limited

Director District 5 – Ms. Wolfrum's Seat

The deadline to submit self-nomination forms is February 28, 2025

4. Insurance Services Office (ISO) Update

The District has supplied all required documentation to ISO for the rating review process. Chief Lombardi anticipates a smooth process for an outcome of an ISO 1 rating, which is the highest rating available. Chief Lombardi noted that West Metro is one of approximately 120 fire agencies in the U.S. that holds both an ISO 1 rating and is also internationally accredited. Insurance companies use the ISO rating to aid in determining risk when considering insuring properties.

B. Finance – Finance Director Bruk Mulaw

1. October 2024 and November 2024 Financial Statements

Mr. Mulaw reviewed the October 2024 and November 2024 financial statements which will be brought to the board for approval at the February 18, 2025 meeting.

C. Administration – Deputy Chief Jeremy Metz

1. Administration Update

The District is beginning the process to renew the fifth-year option with the Denver Federal Center contract. This is a 10-year contract that has yearly renewal options.

The Reserve Apparatus Storage Facility will undergo asbestos mitigation in the next couple of weeks. The goal to begin construction on this project is mid-April.

Chief Metz reported on a recent meeting with representatives of CDOT regarding the 6th and Wadsworth interchange that will affect the future fire station planned at 5th Avenue. He noted that the meeting was productive, with CDOT being receptive to designing considerations for the emergency apparatus at the intersection of 5th and Wadsworth.

The West Metro Recruit Academy 25-01 will begin on February 3, 2025 with 20 recruits from West Metro. Job postings are currently open for a number of civilian positions at this time.

D. Operations – Deputy Chief Dan Pfannenstiel

1. Operations Update

West Metro has one of 50 units from the Denver metro area with a deployed apparatus and crew to the Palisade area in California. The West Metro crew is anticipated to return to Colorado in late January.

The West Metro Recruit Academy that will begin on February 3, 2025 will be a combined academy with 20 West Metro recruits and 13 recruits from Arvada Fire.

The Jefferson County Community Response Team is in place and ready to respond beginning in February. The final phase in developing this program is to fill in the team with staff.

Notable calls included two responses to the White Deer Valley area that was recently included into the District's response territory. The response times for these two emergencies were considerably faster than the response-time capability of the previous fire service that covered this area.

E. Life Safety – Deputy Chief Mike Kirkpatrick

1. Comprehensive Project Report – Electronic Report

2. Fire Investigator Lieutenant Chad Stodden recently began peace officer school with the Jefferson County Combined Regional Police Academy. Lieutenant Stodden will be gone from West Metro for approximately six months before returning to the Life Safety Division.

F. Other Matters

None.

G. Report of Legal Counsel – Adele Reester, Esq.

1. URA/TIF Sharing Agreement for The Bend

The District was approached by a land developer regarding a new urban renewal agreement in a territory at approximately 6th and Simms/Union that is within District boundaries but not currently covered in the District's response territory. Chief Lombardi, Chief Kirkpatrick and Ms. Reester worked to develop the conditions of a tax increment financing (TIF) agreement that would allow for a tiered tax structure to be applied to the development over the next 20 years. The development is planned to be a residential multifamily commercial development and will need services as the development progresses. As a result of this planned development, the developer is requesting to be included in the District's response territory. The board will be asked to consider setting a public hearing on the petition for inclusion of this land space into the District's response territory later in the meeting. Additionally, the board will be asked to consider approving the proposed TIF agreement at the February 18, 2025, board meeting.

H. Lakewood Land Partners LP (The Bend)/Set Public Hearing for Petition for Inclusion – Fire Chief Don Lombardi

Mr. Cassel requested and received consensus to set the public hearing for the petition for inclusion for the Lakewood Land Partners LP (The Bend) property at the February 18, 2025 board meeting.

I. Report of the President – President Jerry Cassel

1. Fire Chief's Appraisal

Chief Lombardi agreed to waive his right to have his appraisal reviewed in executive session, released the District from liability, and holds the District harmless for anything said in the evaluation held in the public session. After a review of the comments on the appraisal, Chief Lombardi expressed his appreciation to the board for their confidence and trust in him, effectively allowing him to continue to pursue what is best for the community. He acknowledged the work of the leadership and staff at West Metro to prioritize succession and empowering leadership throughout the ranks of the organization. In anticipation for this review to be his final review before retirement, Chief Lombardi noted that the future of West Metro is in the hands of the upcoming leaders of this organization, giving him great certainty and pride for this organization's future for many years to come.

J. Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Carolyn Wolfrum

None.

K. Report of the Union – Lieutenant Mike Mulcahy

Lieutenant Mulcahy congratulated Captain Kevin Reichenbach, who was elected as the president of the Colorado Professional Fire Fighters.

L. Report of Civil Service Committee – Secretary Don Sherman

Mr. Sherman reported on the January 14, 2025 Civil Service Committee meetings. The Civil Service Committee has decided to increase the number of members from eight members to nine members in 2025. The next meeting of the CSC is scheduled for February 11, 2025.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

A. Designation of Posting Places – Fire Chief Don Lombardi

MOTION: It was moved by Don Sherman and seconded by Carolyn Wolfrum to approve and authorize continuation of posting public notices and agendas of the West Metro Fire Protection District’s board of directors’ meetings on the West Metro Fire Protection District website; and, the main lobby of the administration building of West Metro Fire Protection District. The motion was voted upon and carried.

B. Fire Chief Search Committee Update – Chairman Don Sherman and Bill Clayton

The application period for the fire chief vacancy has closed. The consultant with CPS HR is now reviewing the candidate applications in preparation to provide the Fire Chief Search Committee with a candidate report. The next meeting of the Fire Chief Search Committee is on Monday, February 3, 2025. Board members have been asked to set aside the full day on February 10 for fire chief interviews, and potentially an early start time to the board meeting on February 18, 2025 when second interviews in executive session could occur.

C. Permit and Construction Fees – Deputy Chief of Life Safety Mike Kirkpatrick

MOTION: It was moved by Don Sherman and seconded by Amira Watters to approve the proposed Life Safety Division fee schedule as presented, effective February 1, 2025. The motion was voted upon and carried.

D. Board Member Term Limits – Fire Chief Don Lombardi

The board discussed the pros and cons of changing board member term limits. After much discussion, it was determined that increasing the term limit from two terms to three terms would be beneficial to the board. Ms. Reester will prepare a resolution for the board to consider approving at the February 18, 2025 board meeting. Should the board approve the resolution, the ballot for the May 6, 2025 board member election would include board member term limits for voter approval.

Mr. Cassel requested and received consensus to direct Ms. Reester to draft a resolution for the District to increase board member term limits from two terms to three terms and to have this topic placed on the May 6, 2025 ballot for voter approval.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Request for the Top Three Names from the Eligibility Register for the Rank of Assistant Chief, Request the Top Three Names from the Eligibility Register for the Rank of Captain, Request the Top Three Names from the Eligibility Register for the Rank of Lieutenant from the Civil Service Committee – Fire Chief Don Lombardi

Chief Lombardi requested and received consensus to request the top three names from the eligibility register for the rank of Assistant Chief, for the Rank of Captain, and for the Rank of Lieutenant from the Civil Service Committee.

XI. BOARD BRIEFS

- A. Supplementing the District’s 2024 Budget for CO-TF1 Special Revenue – Fire Chief Don Lombardi

Mr. Cassel requested and received consensus to set the public hearing to amend the 2024 budget for the CO-TF1 deployment at the February 18, 2025 board meeting.

- B. Training Center Class A Burn Building Replacement – Deputy Chief Jeremy Metz

XII. OTHER MATTERS

- A. Fire Chief Interview Panels – Monday, February 10, 2025 Time TBD
- B. Thank You Note – City of St. Petersburg, Florida

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. Executive session pursuant to Section 24-6-402(4)(f)(I), C.R.S. regarding A personnel matter for Chief Lombardi’s transition to the next fire chief.

MOTION: At approximately 8:22 p.m. it was moved by Jerry Cassel and seconded by Carolyn Wolfrum to enter into an executive session pursuant to § 24-6-402(4)(f)(I) CRS regarding a personnel matter for Chief Lombardi’s transition to the next fire chief. The motion was voted upon and carried.

MOTION: At approximately 9:04 p.m. it was moved by Mike Feeley and seconded by Mike Williams to resume the regular board meeting of the West Metro Fire Protection District. The motion was voted upon and carried.

President Cassel announced that no motions were made nor were any votes taken.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: There being no further business to be presented it was moved Mike Williams and seconded by Mike Feeley to adjourn the regular meeting of the West Metro Fire Protection District board of directors. The motion was voted upon and carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Recording Secretary: /s/ Jennifer Wheaton
/s/ Don Sherman