

Meeting Minutes for
Rico Fire Protection District
Regular Meeting: March 16th, 2026

The regular Rico Fire Protection District Meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Chair Tyler Lapp.

Roll Call: RFPD Board members Gregg Anderson, Sarah Eckles, Tyler Lapp and Paul Ruud. Maria Casanova joined via computer partway through the meeting.

Guests Present: RVFD Fire Chief Todd Jones, RFPD Administrator David Kunz.

Approval of Agenda: Paul Ruud moved to approve the agenda as written. Sarah Eckles seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

Approval of Minutes: Gregg Anderson proposed a minor change to the minutes that clarified how the property transfer documents cannot refer to the MOU. Sarah Eckles moved to approve the amended minutes for the February 16th, 2026 regular meeting; Paul Ruud seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Approval of Financial Report and Accounts Payable, Pension Checks: Kunz presented (2) additional bills for payment: \$395.00 to Zemke and Associates for legal services (property transfer); \$68.96 to Sarah Eckles as reimbursement for food purchased for the MCFCA Fire Academy. Anderson inquired about the funds that were to be transferred from the CSAFE capital improvements account to the DSB general fund (\$136,994 for Rescue Truck purchase). The transfer had not been effected because CSAFE made the transition to a new platform this month. The Board agreed to delay the authorized transfer because: funds in CSAFE are earning interest; and property tax revenue is replenishing the DSB general fund. Sarah Eckles moved to approve the financial report and pay the bills as presented (plus 2 additional), and issue pension checks; Gregg Anderson seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

Maria Casanova joined the meeting by computer.

Administrative Report (Administrator David Kunz):
Exemption from Audit is on agenda.

Grants (awarded):

El Pomar (Wildland fire): Request for \$5,981.83 for wildland fire equipment; awarded \$5000.00. Fulfillment started.

Telluride Foundation FY 2026 (Community): \$5,000.00 in training funds. This funding may be useful to send RVFD members to the Fire Academy for live fire training.

Grants (pending applications):

CFSDPG: State grant for firefighter disease prevention. Submitted 2/13/2026. Kunz applied for \$2539.40 (100%) in funding for highway visibility vests and safety lighting.

CDPHE EMTs: Kunz applied for \$10,486.00 (50/50 match) in communications funding to replace/upgrade (4) mobile radios. Review in process. Award notifications in June, 2026.

Fire Chief Report (Fire Chief Todd Jones):

Runs: (1) mutual aid call to a brush fire.

Training: Fire Academy is coming up; Lewis/Arriola is hosting a burn tower exercise on April 28; RT130 wildland fire refresher class at Dolores Fire next week.

Equipment: Ambulance will need A/C repaired before summer. Suburban will need general maintenance plus suspension work. 931 (new Light Rescue) will need turtle mats, fittings and additional hose. Dylan Robertson has found material for the hoses above the compartments.

Old Business:

Transfer of Lots to RFPD from Town of Rico: Anderson is working with Daniel Zemke and the Rico Town Attorney to continue moving the process forward.

Proposed new Fire Station Construction and Financing: No revised plans yet from Tom Bulk. Other options could include Scott Landefeld (draftsman, not an architect); possibly going back to Jones and Deville.

RFPD By-laws: Gregg Anderson moved to approve the February, 2026 revision of the RFPD by-laws; Paul Ruud seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

SMPA/Discussion of Safety Plan for microgrid facility: The Town of Rico has approved a Special Use Permit with conditions for the project, one of which is to develop a Safety Plan with RVFD. SMPA gave a presentation at RFPD's February meeting which discussed general safety hazards of battery storage facilities, fire response to a thermal runaway, and specifics on the proposed facility north of the old school building. SMPA has not sent additional follow up information since the February meeting. The Board discussed several points of concern over the proposed location of the battery storage facility and FD management of a thermal runaway scenario, including:
Proximity to residential areas: how large of an area would have to be evacuated?
Proximity to highway: would the highway have to be closed?
Proximity to school building, as that would be the primary exposure to be protected
Proximity to Firehouse: would power to the firehouse be affected? Despite the requirement for defensive firefighting operations to require SCBA's to protect from toxic exposure, the air intake for the compressor system would be rendered unsafe.
Commitment of volunteer time for initial response training, as well as refresher training (schedule), as well as the realistic amount of volunteer time for an actual emergency response.
General suggestion to request additional concerns and input from RVFD officers.

New Business:

Resolution 2026-1: RESOLUTION FOR EXEMPTION FROM AUDIT: A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN EXEMPTION FROM AUDIT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025 FOR THE RICO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT, DOLORES COUNTY, STATE OF COLORADO.

Board members have reviewed the application for E From A, and have no questions.

Gregg Anderson moved to approve Resolution 2026-1; Sarah Eckles seconded. Approval was unanimous.

The next regular RFPD meeting is scheduled for April 20th, 2026.

A motion to adjourn was made by at 8:07 PM. By Gregg Anderson; seconded by Sarah Eckles.

Chairman

Secretary