



**CENTRAL VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

215 Wings Way
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MEETING PLACE: Central Valley Fire District, Station 1
215 Wings Way, Belgrade, MT

DATE: July 8, 2025

TIME: Immediately following the IFC Board of Appeals Meeting which began at 5:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE:	<u>(Present)</u>	<u>(Absent)</u>
Trustees:		
Darren Wilkins, Chairman	X	
Ron Murray, Vice Chairman	X	
Mark MacLeod, Sec/Treas.	X	
Rob Holt	X	
Ramie Blakeman	X	
Fire Chief:		
Jay Wittwer	X	
Operations Chief:		X
Jeff Hurley		X
Fire Marshal:		
Jake Zlomie	X	
Acting Clerk:		
Debbie Bloem	X	
City Representative:		
Jim Simon	X	

NOTICE: ALL MEETINGS OF THE CENTRAL VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES ARE RECORDED

GUESTS/VISITORS: Samantha Honatke, Stephen McAdams, Gordon Davidson, Collin Brozka, Justin Monroe and Mike Hilbert

Meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m.

AGENDA: As presented.

MINUTES: Trustee MacLeod moved to approve the **June 10, 2025 minutes** as submitted. Trustee Holt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

FINANCIAL REPORTS: Trustee Murray moved to approve **the financial reports**. Trustee MacLeod seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

COMMUNICATIONS: The District received a thank you note from the **Best Practice Medicine, 2025 EMT Class** for providing ride-along opportunities for the students. The District also received two positive **Google reviews**.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT: As submitted.

Chief Wittwer reported that the GVFA Class of 2025 will graduate this Friday. Central Valley Fire has one student graduating. CVFD will not apply for the SAFER Grant this year due to the cost share requirement. Other revenue enhancement efforts continue. Currently six CVFD firefighters have been deployed to **California for wildland fires**. Not only are their wages covered but backfill is paid and CVFD receives substantial reimbursement for the use of its apparatus which brings revenue into the District. In addition to revenue, deployments provide wildland experience and give the department the opportunity to support neighbors. Two type 3 engines were sent to California and the department still has two available to meet the needs of the District. Chief Wittwer emphasized his desire to answer any questions that the community may have about any actions that CVFD takes.

Chief Wittwer checked in with Battalion Chief White who reported to him that the **4th of July** was mostly uneventful, helped by the precipitation, with one hand injury and a small vehicle fire.

OPERATIONS REPORT:

As submitted.

In Chief Hurley's absence, Chief Wittwer summarized the Operations report. Chief Hurley discovered a very successful **grant writer** who submitted a proposal to apply for a grant on behalf of the District that would substantially cover the department's paramedic training. Trustee Blakeman requested that there be an indemnification if the vendor is managing the grant and a non-compete clause. She also asked that the District negotiate the \$5,000 fee down and possibly add the difference to the management fee after the grant is awarded.

The **water rescue team** has completed their training. Trustee Blakeman suggested collaboration with the local National Guard for both water rescue and active killer training.

Regarding staffing, Chief Wittwer added how encouraged he is that the retention of members has improved dramatically over previous years.

FIRE PREVENTION REPORT: As submitted.

The department's insurer is providing funds toward a board of **trustee training through MSU Local Government Center** on July 28th. Trustees from other departments are invited and the training will be noticed as a possible quorum of CVFD trustees with no District business to be conducted. Fire Prevention staff has begun meeting with other Fire Code officials in the area to work on coordinating efforts. Fire Prevention is also working to improve water access for fire suppression which will benefit the District's ISO rating through Verisk.

LOCAL 4939 REPORT:

Training Captain McAdams expressed the Union's commitment to the wildland deployments and their support in both deploying and providing backfill.

TRUSTEE REPORT:

Trustee Holt stated his concern that legislation be created to protect first responders.

CITY LIAISON REPORT:

Council Member Simon explained the traffic safety study that the City is conducting to make the downtown streets more pedestrian friendly and to facilitate traffic.

Trustee Murray moved to accept **the reports** as submitted. Trustee MacLeod seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Discussion of Resolution to Call for an Election in November to Authorize a Levy

Fire Marshal Zlomie explained that for the Levy Election to be on the November ballot, the ballot resolution would need to be submitted to the County by August 11th. He proposed that the Board call a special meeting on July 28th in order to make that decision. FM Zlomie reviewed the history of the last two failed mill levy elections and the revenue versus operations expenditures over the past few years. The District now is required to request a dollar amount rather than mills. Council Member Simon stated that the City of Belgrade is projecting a population of 28,000 in the next 10 years. It is important to have the best data on projected growth so that this levy can best cover the next few years. It will not be able to cover too far into the future due to the current taxpayer climate. There was some discussion of whether fall or spring was a better time to go out for the levy election. A special meeting will be held on Monday, July 28th at 6:00 pm in the training classroom at Station 1 for further discussion and possible action.

Discussion of 4th of July Outcome

This was discussed previously during the Fire Chief's report.

ACTION ITEMS:

Consideration and Approval to Engage Grant Writer for SAMHSA Rural EMS Training Grant

This item was discussed during the Operations report. The deadline for this grant is in the fall with funds available in the spring.

Trustee Murray moved to approve the **engagement of Grant Writer Arren Gavin for the SAMHSA Rural EMS Training Grant**. Trustee MacLeod seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The next regular meeting of the Central Valley Fire District Board of Trustees is scheduled for **August 12, 2025**.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.


Darren Wilkins, Chairman


Mark MacLeod, Secretary/Treasurer

ATTEST: 
Debbie Bloem, Clerk