



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

215 Wings Way
Belgrade, MT 59714
406-388-4480
(Fax): 406-388-6270

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

DATE: January 13, 2026

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

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

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

GUESTS/VISITORS: Jake Simpson, Jim Martin, Joe Doidge, Ryan Olson, Stephen
McAdams, Samantha Honatke, Chuck Romeo

Meeting was called to order at 5:34 p.m.

Vice Chairman Murray led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA: As presented.

MINUTES: Trustee MacLeod moved to approve the **December 9, 2025 minutes** as submitted. Trustee Holt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

FINANCIAL REPORTS: Financial Reports were not available this month due to a delay with the County.

COMMUNICATIONS: The District received a letter from the **Gallatin County Elections Department** notifying the Board of the upcoming trustee position vacancies and trustee election.

ACTION ITEMS: **Vice Chairman Murray** notified the Board that the two resolution adoption action items will be moved forward in the meeting since it will be necessary for him to leave the meeting early.

Consideration and Adoption of Resolution 252608 Calling for a Trustees Election

Trustee MacLeod moved to **adopt Resolution 252608 calling for a trustee's election**. Trustee Blakeman seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Consideration and Adoption of Resolution 252609 to Designate Qualified Tax-Exempt Obligation

Financial Manager Samantha explained the purpose of this resolution to designate loan payments from the District to be tax-exempt and that this will be their status moving forward.

Trustee MacLeod moved to adopt **Resolution 252609 designating the obligations of the District to be tax-exempt**. Trustee Holt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chuck Romeo of Summer Ridge explained his misunderstanding that the mill levy vote would not be isolated to the residents of his area. He suggested a division of the District to reflect west and east.

Jim Martin stated his desire to have any discussions regarding his concerns in an open meeting and not one on one with trustees or fire administration. He also believes that there is too much of a merger between the board of trustees and the emergency response team. He stated that the trustees have turned their back on his community, and he doesn't see any progress. He stated that this team is terrific but that the trustees need to direct them.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

As submitted.

Chief Jay Wittwer briefly reviewed his submitted report stating that the **Montana Firefighter Consortium** was a success and he saw quite a bit of interest in the Central Valley Fire District.

Community outreach continues to be bolstered by the educational opportunities that the department offers. Current efforts towards **accreditation** focuses on quality of service and efficiency. Chief Wittwer distributed a handout regarding the City of Belgrade's plans for expanding **water storage** to add three million gallons to their current capacity.

Vice Chairman Murray excused himself and **Secretary Treasurer MacLeod** led the remainder of the meeting.

OPERATIONS REPORT:

As submitted.

Deputy Chief Hurley reviewed the incident response for December: Total Incidents: 240; Overlapping Calls: accurate data is unavailable; Mutual Aid Calls: 7.

EMS Reserve Team is doing very well. **Medic 5-2** is at Station 2 part-time. The new **EMS Chief** will begin employment mid-April, tentatively.

DC Hurley reported on the continuing training of the **Water Rescue Team, the Heavy Rescue Engine build and the recruitment and preparations for the Seasonal Wildland Team.**

He reiterated that expenses are reimbursed and revenue is enhanced when the Wildland Team deploys. Captain Anderson continues to work on facilitating the administration of the Wildland Division including applying for appropriate grants.

Training Officer McAdams conducted interviews for a national firefighter recruitment to establish a hiring list for this year.

Trustee Ramie Blakeman asked that peer support be enhanced to care for the wildland firefighters. DC Hurley responded that the **Health and Safety Committee** is active and attending to the entire department and appreciated Trustee Blakeman's request that the wildland firefighters receive particular attention.

Trustee Blakeman addressed a member of the public, reminding them that this is the executive report time, that the public may make comments at the appropriate time and that comments should be directed to the board and not the executive team. The attendee was directed to review the posted Standard of Behavior.

Trustee Rob Holt requested that information be shared via social media regarding the numbers of responses with timely updates to keep the public informed.

FIRE PREVENTION REPORT: As submitted.

Fire Marshal Zlomie reported that the Fire Prevention team continues to add certifications. He also reported that Fire Inspector Dyas will be retiring to spend more time with family.

LOCAL 4939 REPORT:

Firefighter Paramedic Scherrer congratulated **Engineer Paramedic Samlowski** for completing his onboarding process with CVFD as a paramedic. She reminded the trustees of the opportunity to participate in **Fire Ops 101** through the Firefighter's Union. The CVFD **Ice Rescue Team** was recently able to lead training for the area. There are fundraising events coming up to support four members who are participating in the **Firefighter Stairclimb** in Seattle in March. In December, firefighters bagged groceries, Pint Night at Bar 3 is coming up on January 15th and on February 13th there will be a pickleball tournament at the Picklr. On another note, the Union will be presenting two **\$500 scholarships** to graduating high schoolers.

Also, the Union is starting a **run club**, to bring their love for fitness into the community eventually including an encouraging coffee talk focusing on mental health. Finally, three union firefighters supported the **CPAT testing** for 230 individuals through the Montana Firefighter Testing Consortium in Billings.

TRUSTEE REPORT:

None.

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

None.

ACTION ITEMS:

Motion to Open the Collective Bargaining Agreement with IAFF Local 4939 for Contract Negotiations

Chief Wittwer pointed out that the opening of the CBA was agreed to during the review of the CBA last year, in light of the District's finances at the time.

Trustee Blakeman requested training in this process.

Chief Wittwer noted that including trustee representation in the CBA process began a couple of years ago and that Chairman Wilkins participated last year.

Trustee Blakeman moved to **open the Collective Bargaining Agreement with IAFF Local 4939 for Contract Negotiations.**

Trustee Holt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Trustee Blakeman made the motion to move into **Executive Session** to discuss litigation. Trustee Holt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

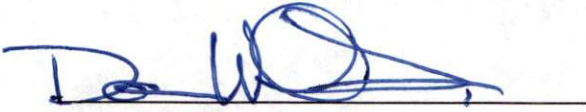
The regular board meeting was re-opened.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

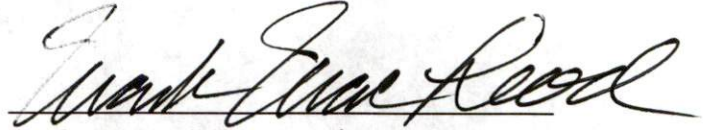
The next regular meeting of the Central Valley Fire District Board of Trustees is scheduled for **February 10, 2026.**

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 p.m.



Darren Wilkins, Chairman



Mark MacLeod, Secretary/Treasurer

ATTEST: 

Debbie Bloem, Clerk