



## MEETING MINUTES

The Fire Board of the Rio Rico Medical and Fire District (RRMFD) met in regular session on Thursday, January 8, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was held at Rio Rico Medical and Fire District administrative office, 822 Pendleton Drive, Rio Rico, AZ.

### AGENDA

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
    - Meeting called to order at 5:33 p.m. by Henry Thysell
  2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
  3. ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS
    - Present: Henry Thysell and Michael Carlson. Present telephonically: Frank Bejarano and Dora Urias  
Brad Beach joined meeting at 6:01 p.m.
  4. CALL TO THE PUBLIC
    - Alejandro Castaneda, President of Lake Patagonia Ranch Estates POA-A, addressed the Board regarding clarity on District reorganization, property tax obligations, pros and cons, level of fire and medical services and current or future impact on their community.
    - Chief Amezaga noted he will contact Alejandro Castaneda regarding his concerns
  5. CONSENT AGENDA
    - a. Approval of minutes
      - i. Regular Session and Executive Session of November 19, 2025 and Special Session of December 18, 2025
        - Motion to approve the Regular Session and Executive Session minutes of November 19<sup>th</sup> as well as the Special Session held on December 18<sup>th</sup> made by Michael Carlson, second by Dora Urias
        - Motion passed unanimously by verbal vote (Henry Thysell, Michael Carlson, Dora Urias and Frank Bejarano)
  6. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE:
    - a. Correspondence
      - Two thank you notes received:  
John and Crystal Patti were at Patagonia Lake State Park in November and John had a boating mishap. Every firefighter that responded was kind, concerned, helpful, thoughtful and very professional turning a scary situation into a manageable one. Expressed thanks and appreciation with beef jerky treats! FF Ricardo Ugarte and FF Patrick McGee were those who responded.  
David Jury wrote his wife fell New Years Eve and was unable to get up; within minutes RRMFD showed up and assisted his wife. "I am so glad we have a team of 1<sup>st</sup> responders RRFD – thank you again RRFD! Captain Hernandez, FF/CEP Luis Saenz and Reserve FF Linda Kelley responded.
- MOVED TO FIRE MARSHAL REPORT
- b. Fire Chief Report
    - Fire Chief Report presented by DC Urbanski. Copy of report on file and posted on website
    - Michael Carlson asked if NSFD Stations were included with mutual aid – no longer included as

mutual aid, now incorporated with RRMFD calls

- Complimented Mark South for his handyman work at Station 1 and assistance in finding crews and equipment to assist with clean up at Station 2
- Frank Granados researched information regarding REMS vehicle, finding a government auction site winning a bid for an identical vehicle of \$34,000 with 29,000 miles

c. Fire Marshal Report

- Report presented by Fire Marshal George Cluff. Copy of report on file
- Michael Carlson asked if there would be a liability to RRMFD should they respond to a solar panel fire being used as shade for a parking lot. Liability would be on the owner of the panels.
- Chief Amezaga complimented staff and crews for all the work on Christmas and community projects

RETURNED TO FIRE CHIEF REPORT

d. Fire Board Member Report

- Brad Beach commented on Christmas parade – well represented, great job on float and lights decorating the vehicles. Commended all those involved with the CPR classes and the trainings.
- Michael Carlson referred to putting together a Fire Corp. As a member of CERT, during their recent meeting, 10 people expressed an interest in becoming a member of the Corp and a survey of tasks was sent to all 10 with six responding. CERT meeting this Saturday at Station 2 – Fire Corp and Cert members will be given a tour of the new training tower

e. Financial Report

i. Presentation of Financial Reports of November 2025

- Financial Reports presented by Ana Holman. Copy of report on file
- County error on tax revenue which was being placed in a wrong account. Ana Holman contacted the County – percentage was incorrect causing a portion to go into an incorrect account. Correction has been made and December statements will show correct values
- Michael Carlson requested Ana to document conversations and information regarding the error should our legal department need information for future endeavors.
- PSPRS actuarial reports as of June 30, 2025 showing a new Tier 1 & 2 unfunded liability amount increase reducing funded percentage from 95.3% to 90.5%. Contribution rate from 15.98% in FY26 to 20.41% in FY27. Policy states liability needs to be fully funded by 2036.
- Medicaid AHCCCS has been posing a challenge to revenue collection. Last year 37 of 82 transports were denied; “it doesn’t meet emergency criteria”. Ruth Hardwick appealed with appeal being denied as well; RRMFD has requested a hearing, to be held January 21, 2026. Legal team has been updated with situation as well.

ii. 2025 Audit Report Draft Discussion

- Ana Holman addressed the Board stating at the last Board meeting it was agreed to have the auditors come and present the “Draft”, however, there is nothing they can present. The document is watermarked as a “Draft” stating “in their opinion the financial statements referred are presented fairly.” Still working on the embezzlement and have not recognized it as a loss for the District, the auditors have registered it as a liability with the County. Decision of the Board was to get some legal guidance on how to present it to the County and see if the County agrees with what legal is presenting. If County agrees, the auditors will issue final audit without liability; no agreement the “Draft” will be issued as the final with the liability.
- Michael Carlson noted the audit was incredibly complimentary stating how the District has saved money; has more than adequate funds for community protection, future growth and adding vehicles; not financing vehicles thus having funds to purchase items. Verbiage was very nice and complimentary – Congratulations!

7. OLD BUSINESS

8. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Discussion and possible action re: Approval of financial reports for November 2025.
  - Motion to approve financial reports for November 2025 made by Brad Beach, second by Michael Carlson
  - Motion passed unanimously by verbal vote
- b. Discussion, review and possible action re: Adoption of revised Ambulance Billing Policy
  - Ana Holman noted this policy is the same as we adopted two years ago; calendar requires review, there are no changes or revisions
  - Motion to adopt the Ambulance Billing Policy that is consistent with the last approval made by Michael Carlson, second by Brad Beach
  - Motion passed unanimously by verbal vote (Members present at vote: Brad Beach, Frank Bejarano, Michael Carlson and Henry Thysell)
- c. Discussion and possible action re: Presentation by former Volunteer Fire Chief of RRFD Les Babnew regarding recognition of 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a Fire Department
  - Les Babnew addressed the Board noting December 1<sup>st</sup> would bring 50 years of the Fire Department to Rio Rico. Les Babnew was the first Chief. Governing board at formation was the Chief and Secretary/Treasurer. In awe with all that has been achieved – finances keeping RRMFD going full speed ahead. Suggests having some activities for the people of Rio Rico to make them aware of what the Fire Department has done in those 50 years.
  - Mark South addressed the Board stating he and Les Babnew put together a brief history of the District. Mark South started in 1980 and at that time there were 30-40 volunteers, all responded to Station 1. Would like to recognize the 50 years; how far we have come, people who have been part of the District, 5 Board members from 2.
  - Brad Beach thanked Les Babnew for being the start of Rio Rico; agrees 50 years needs a Celebration and thanked both for their service
  - Discussion among Board members for suggestions of celebration – tied in with Pancake Breakfast, Safety Day, big deal – add 50 years to t shirts
  - DC Urbanski commented he and Chief Amezaga had spoken with Mark South noting 1981 – Station 1 came about and a new fire truck through a bond; 1985 formally recognized as a Fire District.
  - Michael Carlson will work with Chief and Fire Corp volunteers to go through archives for Information
  - Chief Amezaga suggested checking with the historical society, celebration with community and T shirts
- d. Discussion and possible action re: Election of Chair and Clerk of the Board for one year term effective January 1, 2026
  - Frank Bejarano volunteered to be the Chair of the Board
  - Brad Beach volunteered to be the Clerk of the Board
  - Motion for 2026 beginning today (January 8, 2026) Dr. Bejarano be appointed as Chair of the Board and Brad Beach be appointed as Clerk of the Board made by Michael Carlson, second by Brad Beach
  - Motion passed unanimously (all Board members present) by verbal vote
- e. Discussion, review and possible action re: Nomination/Designation of PSPRS Local Board Chairman
  - Eva Barreda noted by policy, the Board Chair is also the Chair of the Local PSPRS Board unless they choose to delegate to another Board member. Currently Michael Carlson is the Chair of the

Local PSPRS Board and has been for a good number of years. Michael Carlson suggested someone else take the position.

- Brad Beach volunteered to be the Local PSPRS Board Chair
- Frank Bejarano designated Brad Beach as the Chair for the Local PSPRS Board

f. Discussion and possible action re: Day Monthly Board Meeting is held

- Frank Bejarano noted that his schedule conflicts with Wednesday as the meeting date
- Discussion amongst Board members concluded with the last Thursday of the month being feasible
- Motion to adjust Board meeting to the last Thursday of the month made by Michael Carlson, second by Brad Beach
- Motion passed unanimously by verbal vote

g. Discussion, review and possible action re: Approval of DCO proposal for modification of hatches on Training Tower

- Frank Granados addressed the Board noting there is one issue with the training tower hatches for ascending and descending. Floors 2, 3 and 4 are in alignment; however, the top hatch, due to seismic activity within Santa Cruz County, had to be moved over by the engineers and is off between 8 to 22 inches. For safety reasons, wants it moved in alignment. Fire Facilities has offered to supply all the materials and half of the cost of the modifications to make everything in alignment and keep our contract with the warranty for it and not have it go void if we make a change. Asking for the \$7,042 for the change; project is under budget and by trading DCO some of the old metal laying around saved approximately \$10,000 and DCO painted all the exterior handrailing (quoted at \$5,700)
- Michael Carlson noted \$7,042 is a small price to pay for the safety of our firefighters. Frank Bejarano agreed
- Motion to approve DCO proposal for modification of hatches on the training tower at our cost of \$7,042 made by Michael Carlson, second by Brad Beach
- Motion passed unanimously by verbal vote

9. FUTURE MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

a. Next Board Meeting – To Be Determined

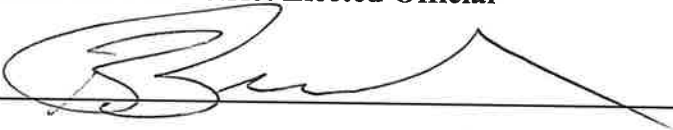
- Next Board meeting will be held January 29<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Dated this 29<sup>TH</sup> day of JANUARY, 2026.  
Rio Rico Medical & Fire District Elected Official

Brad Beach,



Clerk of the Board