

FIRST RESPONSE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Meeting Date: March 23, 2026, 6 p.m., Trowsdale County Courthouse

Present: Amber Russell, Judy Kerr, Chris Gregory, David Nollner, Shane Burton, Steve Whittaker, Linda Bruce, Brian Crook, David Thomas.

Others Present: Fire Chief Ken Buckmaster, Sheriff Ray Russell, Gina Duncan

Chairman Amber Russell called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

Minutes of the February 23, 2026 meeting were reviewed. **Motion to approve by Burton, second by Crook. Motion approved.**

EMS Director Matt Batey was not present, written report submitted to committee.

Rescue Squad Director Timmy Moore was not present, no report filed.

Gregory asked if the hospital committee had met to review contract proposal and discuss options. Chairman Russell said it had not as of yet. Kerr asked who was on committee. Chairman Russell knew herself, Shane Burton, Daniel Summers, was not sure of others.

Fire Chief Ken Buckmaster presented his department's report. Fire currently has 25 members, now lacking extra equipment for some. Averaging more members responding per call. No current vehicle needs.

RFQ closed February 13 for requested additional building, six firms responded. Department looking at three of those. No estimated price received yet, looking at 43x85 feet, could be adjusted if necessary. Mayor's office has spoken with engineers; fire building would not affect any plans to put new jail on Broadway property. Bruce asked if any bid was ready for building, not as of yet.

Gregory asked for clarification of equipment needs. Buckmaster said turnout gear, extrication radios, but some turnout lacks face pieces. E-dispatch ability limited to 25 members, adding more would incur extra cost.

Buckmaster estimated per diem costs for current year would be around \$97,000 at current rate, as opposed to \$56,000 previous year. Gregory asked number of responders per call, Buckmaster estimated nine per fire call and 14-17 per motor vehicle accident. Many calls are false alarms, controlled burns, public assist.

Gregory noted previous discussion of graduated per diem payouts at Budget Committee, said might be something to look at to bring overall payout back down.

Crook asked how many fire members are also on Rescue Squad. Buckmaster estimated 18. Crook asked if new fire bay could house Rescue vehicles as well.

Chairman Russell noted existence of 2023 report on possibility of combining fire and rescue, has not been able to obtain from mayor's office. Buckmaster suggested putting himself, Batey, Moore and someone else on ad hoc group to look at how to combine.

Motion by Gregory to have Amber Russell, three department heads meet to examine combining fire/rescue, second by Kerr. Motion approved.

Russell asked about billing homeowners insurance for fire responses, might require county ordinance. Gregory asked if other counties do this, some do.

Buckmaster estimated \$9,000 spent on maintenance of fire trucks, should be completed by end of March. Training being done through Vector Solutions, some by Second Creek w/ Lafayette.

Discussion held on burn permit ordinance. Thomas said updated ordinance repeals all county rules, so will default to state forestry requirements. Permit can be obtained online from state between October 15-May 15 at no charge to public. No oversight required by county.

Motion by Gregory to refer ordinance to Codes & Zoning Committee with favorable recommendation and changing effective date to October 15, second by Thomas. Motion approved.

Next meeting scheduled for April 27, following LEO Committee meeting.

Motion to adjourn by Crook, second by Gregory. Motion approved.

Minutes presented by Chris Gregory.