HYALITE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
SYNOPSIS

DATE: OCTOBER 20, 2026 TIME: 7:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Sourdough Fire Station, 4541 S. 3rd Rd., Bozeman, Montana

In compliance with MCA 2017 2-3-212 and the Hyalite Rural Fire District Bylaws, the minutes of HRFD Board of Trustees open public meetings are comprised of an audio recording and a written synopsis. The audio recording is designated as the official record of a meeting. The written synopsis serves to assist the public in accessing portions of the audio recording and is a good faith attempt to provide the public with another method to be informed about the actions of the Board. The minutes are available to the public at www.hyalitefire.org/board-meeting-minutes/ or at the Hyalite Rural Fire District Administrative Offices, 4541 S. 3rd Rd., Bozeman, MT, during its standard business hours.

TRUSTEES IN ATTENDANCE:
Justin Miller
Pete Geddes
Jason Jarrett
Ken Beideman
Bob Pailthorpe

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:
Brian Nickolay, Fire Chief
Chris Dahlhauser, Assistant Fire Chief
Sheryl Wyman, Administrative Assistant
Colin Prato, Division Chief of Maintenance

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:
Robert Holt, CVFD Trustee

0:00:01	**CALL TO ORDER OF HYALITE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT** Chairman Miller called the meeting to order and reminds everyone the meeting is being recorded. He asks for any public comment on non-agenda items. None given. **HYALITE CONSENT AGENDA** Chairman Miller asks if there are any requests to pull anything from the Consent Agenda for review. None given. **Motion**: **Trustee Jarrett moves to approve consent agenda as presented** Trustee Geddes seconded the motion.

	Vote: Jarrett-Yes; Pailthorpe-Yes; Beideman-Yes; Miller-Yes; Geddes-Yes-Unanimous approval. *[See September 15, 2026 Board Packet for Consent Agenda items Approved]*
0:00:30	**Agenda Item 1 – Volunteer Firefighters Association Report** No report given.
0:00:36	**Agenda Item 2 – Montana Rural EMS Funding** Chief provides background on rural EMS grants available in the State. The EMS funding for the State will be funded through the State DPHHS. Every year they do a grant program to any rural health EMS program. Every year we have applied but denied funding. To date, no further funding has been announced as available.
0:02:52	**Agenda Item 3 – Capital Expenditures and Best Practices Guidance** Trustee Beideman makes a request for three proposals for major purchases. He gives examples of the new HVAC system and the new ambulance purchase. Chief Nickolay gives the history of the HVAC system. Discussion is held among the board members and Chief. Trustee Geddes feels Trustee Beideman's request is more directed at the board being more informed on capital purchases. There is a capital purchase policy in the district. Trustee Beideman would like to see a couple more proposals before a purchase. Trustee Geddes would like the board to review the current procurement policy and if any changes are requested, we can discuss those changes after reviewing the policy. Chief Nickolay discusses the purchase of the ambulance. This item will be brought next month for discussion after everyone has had a chance to review.
0:21:31	**Agenda Item 4 – Volunteer Command Staffing** Chief advises the board he does not have a proposal to prevent at this meeting. He needs to meet with the staff to go over the proposal and what that would look like for command staffing.
0:23:58	**Agenda Item 5 – Appointment of a Trustee to the Impact Fee Coalition of Gallatin County Fire District** Chief Nickolay and Trustee Pailthorpe will be attending a coalition meeting with the Gallatin County commission on October 29, 2026. This is a pre-meeting to see how the county feels about this project.

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0:24:40	**Agenda Item 6 – Replacement of Rae Fire Station – Standing Agenda Item** Liz Loomis came out to the district on October 1st. We toured the district. She was able to see the district boundaries, current stations, and growth in the district. We will be sending out a newsletter explaining who we are and the volunteers. This was developed by Liz and her team. We were looking into putting signage around the district and were told by the County that this would not be possible. The other option would be to put signs on private property. Discussion is held between the trustees and the Chief. Trustee Geddes suggests having the volunteer association do some of the legwork on this endeavor. Discussion is held regarding the Loomis contract and what we want moving forward towards the mill levy campaign. Chief Nickolay has met with Falcon Hollow and Hyalite Foothills HOAs. The growth in the area is a big selling point. It is very apparent that when the station was initially built it was for protection of the trailer court and a few farms. Now the station has an additional of 1,000 – 2,000 homes to cover. The meetings were very productive. Trustee Pailthorpe asks about a visual campaign. Trustee Geddes asks about a Rural Improvement District.
0:43:51	**Agenda Item 7 – Fire Chief's Report** Chief goes through his fire chief's report. 58 calls in September. Membership is at 52. We have four of five of our needed captains. Questions are asked about the volunteers and who may be able to be promoted. Residences are full. In September our Firefighter 2 academy completed propane liquid fires. This training was made possible with help from Madison River Propane. We have two significant repairs at the Sourdough Station. Replacement of the fire suppression pump and replacement of one of the HVAC units. We received materials from the county for letting them store gravel while working on Cottonwood Rd. This was a great benefit to the Cottonwood Station parking lot. We should be received the new ambulance next week. *[See Attachment A-Fire Chief's Report]*
0:52:38	**Agenda Item 8 – Trustee's Activities** Trustee Jarrett reports on the EMS administrative board. Numbers are starting to work down and now under ten million. Work will be moving forward to see what can be presented to the public.

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0:55:20	**Announcements** • Next Board Meeting – Tuesday, November 17, 2026 • Audit is currently underway.
0:56:18	**Adjournment of Meeting**

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Hyalite Rural Fire District

Fire Chief's Report

October 2026

Prepared by: Fire Chief, Brian Nickolay

1. The Hyalite Fire District responded to a total of 58 incidents in September 2026. Our total call volume for 2026 as of October 1st is 568.
    - Total calls September 2025 - 62
    - Total calls September 2024 - 45
    - Total calls September 2023 - 65
    - Total calls September 2022 - 57
    - Total calls September 2021 - 43

2. Our current roster is at 52 members (effective 10/1/2026).
    - 1 Career Fire Chief
    - 1 Career Assistant Fire Chief
    - 2 Career Division Chiefs
    - 3 Career Captains
    - 4 Volunteer Captains
    - 1 Volunteer Reserve Captains
    - 6 Volunteer Lieutenants
    - 10 Volunteer Firefighters
    - 10 Volunteers Apprentice Firefighters
    - 1 Volunteer Reserve Firefighters
    - 1 Volunteer Driver/Operator
    - 9 Volunteer Recruit Firefighters
    - 2 Volunteer Recruit EMTs

3. We are staffed with four (4) of five (5) needed volunteer captains for covering overnight command shifts. Alexi Ness left our department in September to pursue a job as a Paramedic in WA.
    - We currently have four (4) of our needed five (5) volunteer captains.
        i. Nick Blommel
        ii. Evan Jones
        iii. Jake Krieger
        iv. Ruby Weinberg
    - Training Captain Metta Trautmann remains on extended family leave.
    - Our Recruitment and Retention Captain continues to work a modified schedule and cover a night of command per week.

- Myself, Assistant Chief Dahlhauser, Division Chief Malone and Division Chief Prato still will provide coverage at night where we lack availability.
- I will soon have a long-term proposal for the board to review. This will include a permanent solution to our command coverage issues.

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4. We currently have eight (8) resident firefighters living at the Sourdough Fire Station.
    - Current Sourdough Residents -
        - Kade O'Brian, Evan Jones, Ruby Weinburg, Zach Fredach, Garrett O'Tool, Logan Gillespie, Henry Davis, and Miriam Genter.
        - Sourdough resident firefighters continue to fill weekend shifts Friday 7pm – Monday 7am.

5. We currently have four (4) resident firefighters living at the Cottonwood Fire Station.
    - Current Cottonwood Residents –
        - Keegan Torsdahl, Sarah Shenk, Jake Teselle, and Ben Tuma.
    - Cottonwood resident firefighters continue to fill weekday night shifts Monday – Thursday 7pm – 7am.

6. We currently have three (4) residents at the Rae house.
    - Current Rae Residents -
        - Kate Brownell, Tyler Palmer, Colton Rue and Brandon Pelton.

7. Non-resident volunteer firefighters continue to cover six-hour shifts at the Sourdough Fire Station on Monday - Friday 7am – 7pm. With our current level of staffing, we are able to cover 4 of our 10-day shifts with at least 2 volunteers.

8. We continue our regular multi company fire and EMS training every Wednesday night and command training twice a month. Our training through the month of September has focused on fighting attic fires. We then trained on gabel end fire attack for structure fire. For EMS we have been training on patient traumatic injuries.

9. Our fall recruit firefighter academy is moving along. Under the leadership of captains Leeper and Kuntz, the academy has completed exterior and interior fire attack. They have now moved on to enter, isolate, rescue. We unfortunately had to remove one of our recruit firefighters due to the individual not passing their NFPA required physical. We currently have nine (9) recruit firefighters and two (2) recruit EMTs. Our fall academy is expected to be completed in December.

10. In September our Firefighter 2 academy completed propane liquid fires. This training was made possible with help from Madison River Propane.

11. I met with the Falcon Hollow HOA on October 6th and the Hyalite Foothills HOA on October 13th. Both meeting provide good support for the Rae Fire Station Replacement. Engagement of homeowners has been positive and there is a good understanding of the need for a new fire station.

12. The fire district continues to be involved with the EMS Steering Group in Gallatin County. I am still one of the steering committee members.
13. I am still on the Board of Directors with Montana State Fire Chiefs Association as a combination section director.
14. I am still on the Montana State Fire Chiefs Wildland Fire Committee.
15. I am still on the Montana Intrastate Mutual Aid Committee through the Montana Disaster and Emergency Services.
16. I am still on the operational committee for the Northern Rockies Coordination Group.
17. I continue to sit on the board of the Gallatin County Fire Council as Vice President. I also continue to chair the Gallatin County Fire Council communications committee.
18. I am still a Gallatin County Deputy Fire Warden.
19. Assistant Chief Dahlhauser continues to chair the SOP committees with the Gallatin County Fire Council.
20. Division Chief Prato continues to be a member of the Search and Rescue Communications group.
21. Division Chief Malone continues to be a member of the Tactical Emergency Medical (TEMS) group.
22. We had no firefighter injuries in the month of September.
23. All apparatus are in service.
24. Engine 6-4 was out of service from September 9th - September 11th due to an exhaust EGR issue. The Central Valley Fire District Fleet Services Shop performed the repair which was a disassembling and cleaning of the EGR.
25. We are moving forward with two significant repairs to the Sourdough Fire Station:
    a. One is the replacement of the fire suppression pump. Summit Fire Suppression will complete the replacement in mid October. They will also be installing a water alarm in the vault for the pump. This repair will cost an estimated $29,182.
    b. The second is the replacement of one of the HVAC units at the Sourdough Station. PJs Plumbing and Heating will complete this repair on November 3rd – November 6th. Part of this repair will also include a redesign of the heating and cooling zones for the resident wing of the station. These two repairs should fix the issues we have had with the zone in the past. This repair will cost an estimated $30,311.