



**Loveland Fire Rescue Authority Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 28, 2026
410 E. 5th St, Loveland, CO 80537
Fire Administration Building, Bartholf Conference Room
and Via Video and Audio Conference
1:30 p.m.**

Members Present:

Chairman Jeff Swanty, Director of the Loveland Rural Fire Protection District ("Rural District")
Vice Chairman Paul Bukowski, Rural District President
Director Patrick McFall, City of Loveland Mayor
Director Andrea Samson, City of Loveland Council Member
Director Jim Thompson, Loveland City Manager

Staff Present:

Tim Sendelbach, Fire Chief
Tim Smith, Assistant Chief
Greg Ward, Assistant Chief
Andrea Smith, Finance Manager
Andrea Wright, HR Manager
Kristi Coleman, Board Secretary
Emily Powell, Ireland Stapleton

Visitors:

Carie Dann, LFRA Battalion Chief & Fire Marshal
Eric Klaas, LFRA Battalion Chief
Lt. Matt DeDecker, LFRA Wildfire Program Coordinator

Call to Order:

Chairman Swanty called the Loveland Fire Rescue Authority ("LFRA") Board meeting to order on the above date at 1:30 p.m.

Approval or Amendment of Agenda:

It was the consensus of the Board to approve the agenda as presented.

Awards and Presentation:

Chief Sendelbach recognized Chief Carrie Dann for receiving her Fire Marshal credential through the Center for Public Safety Excellence.

Public Comment:

Adam Baukol, Captain of Engine 45, addressed the Board, emphasizing the importance of the LFRA Way document in guiding the organization's culture and standards. He expressed concern that the Board may have deviated from these principles. He highlighted the dedication of members striving to advance the organization from good to great, despite budgetary challenges, and stressed the need for financial stability. He commended Chief Sendelbach and the executive staff for their leadership and urged the Board to uphold professionalism, openness, honesty, respect, and trust. He called for the Board to reconnect with the organization's vision and focus on building bridges rather than walls.

Brandon Gleditsch, LFRA Training Lieutenant, addressed the Board to support the organization and the Fire Chief. He highlighted the Chief's efforts in addressing financial and staffing challenges, developing solutions, analyzing data, and collaborating with stakeholders. He noted the Chief's dual role in managing budgets and policies while also leading firefighters. He emphasized the dedication of LFRA personnel and stated that he believes the current 80-20 funding model is ineffective. He called for respect, collaboration, and support for the Fire Chief, urging the Board to address systemic issues affecting the department and community.

Matt DeDecker, LFRA Wildfire Coordinator, addressed the Board, emphasizing the need for collaboration to secure the future of the organization. He highlighted critical staffing needs and the challenges of maintaining service levels amid budget cuts. He noted that the department is staffed below national standards for a community of Loveland's size and risk profile. He expressed concern about perceived criticism directed at leadership during Board meetings and the ongoing issues of underfunding and understaffing. He warned of potential outcomes like increased response times, personnel burnout, and personnel turnover if these issues remain unaddressed. He urged the Board to work collaboratively with the Chief, prioritize the community's needs, and support the organization's efforts to improve and sustain its services.

Kevin Hessler, LFRA B Shift Battalion Chief, addressed the Board to express support for the Fire Chief. He emphasized the need for the Board members, whether from Rural District or City areas, to collaborate effectively. He highlighted the continuous efforts made by the LFRA team to improve their work and noted the importance of

approaching meetings with a positive attitude, as he believes has been demonstrated by the Fire Chief.

Dave Schuetz, Captain of Engine 43, who is responsible for IT and data management, explained the difficulties in providing data requested by the Board due to limited resources and the dual responsibilities of managing IT and fire station duties. He asked for the Board's patience and understanding, emphasizing that the challenges are not due to a lack of effort but rather resource constraints. He highlighted the dedication of the department's personnel, who continue to perform at high levels despite these challenges.

Craig Willard, speaking as the Union President, expressed concern that the department is heading in the wrong direction, particularly regarding staffing and resource allocation. He urged the Board to prioritize core services and ensure adequate staffing to meet the community's needs. He called for collaboration with the Fire Chief to realign the department's trajectory and improve its operational effectiveness.

Tony Distefano, LFRA A Shift Engineer on Engine 41, highlighted the ongoing funding challenges and their detrimental impact on morale and focus within the department. He expressed support for the Fire Chief, noting the Chief's efforts to address these issues and improve the department's operations. He urged the Board to work with the department to secure necessary funding and implement improvements, emphasizing that such actions are essential for maintaining the department's effectiveness and community trust.

Kellen Froese, LFRA B Shift Engineer on Engine 41, reiterated support for the Fire Chief and emphasized the impact of Board decisions on the Authority's operations and personnel.

Consent Agenda

- 1. Minutes from the Loveland Fire Rescue Authority December 17, 2025 Regular Board Meeting.**
- 2. Reappoint Chris Klaas to the Consolidated Volunteer Firefighters Pension Board.**

A motion was made by Director Samson to approve the consent agenda, as presented. Seconded by Director Bukowski; the motion carried unanimously.

Regular Agenda:

3. Consider a Motion to Adopt Resolution R-180, Establishing the 2026 Board Meeting Location, Time and Dates, and Designating the Location for Posting Meeting Notices of the Loveland Fire Rescue Authority.

Chief Sendelbach discussed Resolution R-180, which establishes the 2026 Board meeting location, time, and dates, and the places for posting notices of meetings. Ms. Coleman noted that the November and December meetings fall directly next to holidays and noted proposed alternate dates for these meetings. The November meeting date is noted as November 18, 2025 and the December meeting date is noted as December 16, 2025.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Director Bukowski to adopt Resolution R-180, establishing the 2026 Board meeting location, time and dates, and designating the location for posting meeting notices. Seconded by Director Samson; motion carried unanimously.

4. Consider a Motion to approve Resolution R-181 Adopting the 2025 Loveland Fire Rescue Authority Wildfire Resiliency Code.

Fire Marshal Carie Dann presented the 2025 LFRA Wildfire Resiliency Code ("Code") to the Board, highlighting its alignment with the new statewide wildfire resiliency code and local adaptations to address the Authority's specific wildfire risks. The Code focuses on construction hardening, materials and methods, fuels management, and fencing requirements, emphasizing defensible space and non-combustible materials within a zero to five-foot perimeter around structures. It applies to new constructions and uses data from the LFRA Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) to define risk areas accurately.

Chief Dann discussed collaboration with local jurisdictions like Larimer County and the Town of Johnstown to ensure consistent wildfire risk reduction. Board members asked about the Code's integration with existing building codes and the role of homeowners' associations. Chief Dann clarified these points, emphasizing community involvement.

A motion was then made by Director Thompson to approve Resolution R-181 adopting the 2025 Loveland Fire Rescue Authority Wildfire Resiliency Code. Seconded by Director Bukowski; motion carried unanimously.

5. Review Briefing Papers and Correspondence

a. Chief's Report

Chief Sendelbach reported the following matters to the Board:

- **Correspondence**

Chief Sendelbach discussed several letters of appreciation received by the LFRA, including a letter from KidsPak acknowledging LFRA's successful participation in a packing race against Subaru, an email expressing gratitude for LFRA's assistance in resolving a carbon monoxide issue related to a furnace, and a note thanking LFRA for their help with a smoke detector battery.

Chief Sendelbach also shared multiple articles featuring LFRA in the news. One article highlighted the new AED occupancy requirement in the fire code; another article covered a Christmas Eve house fire.

- **LFRA Health & Wellness Clinic**

Chief Sendelbach discussed exploration of potential partnerships with local law enforcement and emergency services to extend its medical physical services at the LFRA Health & Wellness Clinic. The goal is to include more contributors, potentially reducing costs for all involved entities, and eventually extend services to retired personnel.

- **Buckskin Heights/Fletcher Hill Town Hall**

Chief Sendelbach discussed an upcoming town hall meeting for the Buckskin Heights and Fletcher Hill communities, which were recently included into the Rural District's boundaries and LFRA's service area. The meeting aims to inform residents about the services they voted to receive and address any concerns, particularly those related to past wildfire experiences.

- **LFRA By The Numbers**

Chief Sendelbach discussed efforts to improve data management and reporting, including exploring potential contracts with companies like Dark Horse Emergency to bridge gaps in data collection and analysis.

- **Budget Calendar**

Andrea Smith provided an overview of the City's 2027 budget preparation timeline, emphasizing the need for early preparation to meet City deadlines. The Board was informed of the process and the importance of having a preliminary budget ready by March to align with the City's budget cycle.

- **Joint Board/City Council Workshop**

Chief Sendelbach discussed plans for a Joint Rural Board and City Council Workshop aimed at aligning LFRA needs and priorities with those of the City Council and the Rural Board. The workshop is intended to facilitate a comprehensive discussion on LFRA's strategic direction and funding requirements, and the agenda will include a review of LFRA's current challenges, opportunities for collaboration, and potential areas for improvement. To ensure a productive session, the workshop will be facilitated by Darin Atteberry, a retired city manager from Fort Collins, who has extensive experience with Authority models like LFRA's.

The workshop is scheduled to follow the February 25th LFRA Board meeting, with the goal of preparing City Council members for their upcoming City Budget retreat.

While the full City Council's attendance is not feasible, the workshop will include the City Council representatives who are appointed to the LFRA Board. Chief Sendelbach expressed optimism that the facilitated discussion will foster a better understanding of LFRA's role and enhance cooperation between the Rural Board and City Council.

- **Engine, Rescue & Tower Cab/Chassis Inspection**

Chief Ward discussed the recent trip by LFRA members and a fleet mechanic to Ohio to inspect the cab and chassis for the new rescue, engine, and tower apparatus. The rescue and engine are expected to arrive by March or April, while the tower is anticipated in September. It was noted that the engine and rescue were ordered in January 2024, and the tower in May 2023, illustrating the long lead times for fire apparatus procurement.

- **Station 10 Art**

Chief Ward discussed the art project for Station 10, which is underway and features a sculpture that pays homage to Loveland's original Bartholf and Hook & Ladder fire companies. The artwork will be installed outside the station, complementing the historical theme of the station's lobby.

- **Community Education & Engagement**

Chief Ward highlighted LFRA's public education efforts, including participation in the Santa Squad deliveries, Teddy Bear donations, and Keep the Wreath Red program.

Chief Smith reported the following matters to the Board:

- **Operational Responses**

Chief Smith provided an update on recent operational activities, including two kitchen fires, a HazMat mercury spill, ice dive training at Lake Loveland, and a water rescue call.

6. Executive Session Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b) To Receive Advice of Legal Counsel Regarding a Personnel Matter.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously voted to go into executive session pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b) to receive advice of legal counsel regarding a personnel matter. The Board and Attorney Powell attended the executive session.

It was the consensus of the Board to adjourn the executive session at 4:43 p.m.

After a brief recess, the Board resumed the regular meeting at 4:45 p.m.

7. Possible Action on Any Matters Discussed in Executive Session

A motion was made by Director Samson to appoint a Personnel Committee consisting of Chairman Swanty and Director Thompson to address a confidential personnel matter. Seconded by Director McFall, motion carried unanimously.

8. Other Business for Board Consideration

No other business for Board consideration.

Adjournment:

With no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Swanty adjourned the meeting at 4:46 p.m.

The foregoing minutes, having been approved by the LFRA Board of Directors, constitute the official minutes of the meeting held on the date stated above.



Jeffrey M. Swanty, Chairman



Kristi Coleman, Secretary