



Hyalite Rural Fire District

Board Meeting Synopsis Approval Form

The written synopsis of the July 21, 2026 Hyalite Rural Fire District (HRFD) Board of Trustees Annual Board Meeting was approved by motion of the HRFD Board of Trustees on August 18, 2026.

Chair Signature

Justin Miller, Chairman

Printed Name

Secretary Signature

Ken Beideman, Secretary

Printed Name

**HYALITE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
SYNOPSIS**

DATE: JULY 21, 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
Bob Pailthorpe

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Brian Nickolay, Fire Chief
Sheryl Wyman, Administrative Assistant
Colin Prato, Division Chief of Maintenance
Metta Trautmann, Training Captain

PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:

Kade O'Brian, President, HVFA
Family and Friends of Firefighters

0:00:03	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 Pailthorpe moves to approve consent agenda as presented Trustee Jarrett seconded the motion. Vote: Jarrett-Yes; Geddes-Yes; Pailthorpe-Yes; Miller-Yes; Unanimous approval.
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	<i>[See June 16, 2026 Board Packet for Consent Agenda items Approved]</i>
0:00:40	Agenda Item 1 – Pinning Ceremony of New Firefighters Volunteer Firefighters Ben Tuma, Ashton Cornelius, Clay Darby, Henry Davis, Miriam Genter, Logan Gillespie, David Morton, Sawyer Smith, Keegan Toresdahl are present. Chief Nickolay gives opening statement. Firefighters performed over 250 hours of training. Volunteers introduce themselves to the board. The Chief swears in volunteers. Each volunteer is recognized, pinned, and given their certificate.
0:20:12	Agenda Item 2 – Volunteer Firefighters Association Report President Kade O’Brian advises the board the volunteer association held their annual meeting. Firefighter O’Brian was elected as President, Evan Jones is the Vice President, and board members Ashton Cornelius and Garrett O’Tool. Their focus is currently on preparing for the annual pancake breakfast, scheduled for September 19, 2026. They are currently working on getting donations, and have currently raised approximately \$4,500 which is covering the cost of the breakfast.
0:22:10	Agenda Item 3– Revised Proposal from Firescope Mid-America, LLC (Doug Forsman) Chief Nickolay explains to the board Mr. Forsman submitted a new proposal for consideration. Chief feels this is not quite the direction we are looking for right now. We are looking for more of a public relations and outreach component. Questions and discussion are held among the trustees. Trustee Pailthorpe and Geddes ask questions on any value Doug may bring to the table. Motion: Chair Miller moves to advise Mr. Forsman we are moving in another direction and will contact him if his services are needed in the future. Trustee Geddes seconded the motion. Vote: Jarrett-Yes; Geddes-Yes; Pailthorpe-Yes; Miller-Yes; Unanimous approval. <i>[See Attachment A – Revised Proposal from Firescope Mid-America, LLC (Doug Forsman)]</i>
0:28:20	Agenda Item 4 – Appointment of a Trustee to the Impact Fee Coalition of Gallatin County Fire District Chief states Gallatin Gateway requests a representative to revisit the topic of fire impact fees. A fee is collected per development to help bolster the services for new developments. They would like to create a coalition and for this ask they would like to see the chief and one trustee. It would be a one-time fee for new construction. We have a new commission and would like to approach them with reinstating the fire impact fee.

	Discussion is held among the trustees. The legislature has limited the counties and what they can do as far as collecting impact fees. Trustees are looking for more information from the county as well as what the statute actually says for guidelines. The board would like more information. Trustee Pailthorpe states he would help explore the topic further when the time comes. The topic will be tabled for now with direction to staff to present more information.
0:39:53	Agenda Item 5 – Hybrid Administrative Assistant Position The Chief explains he is looking at making the Administrative Assistant position a hybrid position, allowing the current employee the opportunity to work a hybrid remotely position. She would be in the office during invoice weeks and board meetings. We would need to eliminate the walk in option. Questions are asked by the trustees. We would provide information to the public to reach the station. The Chief feels there will be impacts but nothing significant. Discussion is held among the trustees. The Chief would like to revise the job description and provide Sheryl with an offer letter laying out the position. Motion: Trustee Pailthorpe moves to approve the hybrid Administrative Assistant position. Trustee Geddes seconded the motion. Vote: Jarrett-Yes; Geddes-Yes; Pailthorpe-Yes; Miller-Yes; Unanimous approval.
0:44:27	Agenda Item 6 – Replacement of Rae Fire Station – Standing Agenda Item Chief Nickolay hasn't had much public engagement the last month. He is trying to make contact with the Falcon Hollow and Woodlands Park subdivisions. They work through a property management company and trying to make contact with the actual HOA. We have been working with Liz Loomis and have signed an engagement letter not to exceed \$5,000 for exploratory work. She has asked that we put together a committee. The committee will consist of Brian, Sheryl, Allie Kuntz, and Pete Geddes.
0:48:08	Agenda Item 7 – Fire Chief's Report Chief goes through his fire chief's report. 58 calls in June. 360 as of July 1. Membership is at 43. He is working on presenting a different command model. All residences are full.

	Chris Leeper our recruitment captain is trying to reach different audiences for volunteers. He has posted a sign-up Hyalite canyon. We will be participating in Catapalooza. We are being involved in rodeos and Music on Main. We will be trying an accelerated academy in August with three firefighters. This will consist of 14 full day trainings. At the end of the 14 days, they will have completed the 250 hours of training for their Firefighter 1 academy. A Firefighter 2 academy is ongoing. The EMS operational committee will hold a full day workshop on July 22nd. Staff is working on the transition from ESO to First Due. Assistant Fire Chief Dahlhauser has been overseeing the transition and has done a great deal of work in this area. We have begun to work with Streamline Web services for our new fire district website. Captain Prato has been working hard to get our transition from Google to Microsoft complete. They are working on remedying the fire pump situation at the Sourdough station. The pump is in a vault underground and we have had issues with the vault flooding. <i>[See Attachment B-Fire Chief's Report]</i>
1:00:13	Agenda Item 8 – Trustee’s Activities Trustee Jarrett is still meeting with the Headwater EMS committee. They are currently working on the service delivery model and costs.
1:02:03	Announcements • Next Board Meeting – Tuesday, August 18, 2026 • Pancake Breakfast – Saturday, September 19, 2026
1:02:39	Adjournment of Annual Meeting

REVISED PROPOSAL
FOR CONSULTING SERVICES
FOR
HYALITE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT



FIREScope MID-AMERICA, LLC
11024 NW 20th Street
Yukon, Oklahoma 73099

Firescope Mid-America, LLC

June 23, 2026

Brian Nickolay
Fire Chief
Hyalite Rural Fire District
4541 South 3rd Road
Bozeman, Montana 59715

RE: Revised Proposal for Services

Dear Chief Nickolay and Board Members,

Please find included a revised proposal for services subsequent to my conversation with the Hyalite Rural Fire District Board on June 16, 2026. Firescope Mid-America is committed to delivering services and products that will provide important information for decisions regarding a proposed issue to be presented to your electorate. Through years of experience in managing fire services and consulting with other agencies, I have had opportunities to participate in many planning efforts and confront many issues. I believe that we can jointly develop high quality information that will support important decision for the Hyalite Rural Fire District and its citizens.

If you have any questions regarding the revised proposal, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,



Douglas P. Forsman, President
FIREScope MID-AMERICA, LLC
11024 NW 20th Street
Yukon, Oklahoma 73099-1242
Phone: 501-757-0099
E Mail: firefors2@gmail.com

FIREScope MID-AMERICA, LLC

Proposal:**Firescope Mid-America will provide the following services. We will:**

- Be onsite in Montana for the period or periods necessary and not less than 4 days.
- Review pertinent Departmental records.
- Review records from the dispatching agency.
- Research available information from various agencies regarding community planning and development for Hyalite and adjacent response areas.
- Analyze the information in relation to organizational goals, national standards and recognized good practice.
- Collect and analyze service delivery and management data that is pertinent to the development of information for upcoming project.
- Develop information necessary for public engagement sessions in advance of the project balloting.
- Make other recommendations as indicated by the project research.
- Prepare a written report.
- Operate with integrity, candor, and compassion.

Fees:**We will provide the above services for the project for the following compensation:**

A firm, fixed fee of \$26,000.00 that includes all fees and expenses. A payment of 10% of the fee will be due within 30 days of our receipt of the Notice to Proceed. An additional 20% will be due within 30 days of the completion of the on-site work in Montana. The remainder will be due within 30 days of the mailing of hard copies of the final report.

Additional Services:

Firescope Mid-America will be pleased to provide additional services as requested by the District. Additional services can be quoted based upon the scope of work. In relation to this specific project, we will agree to be present for up to 3 public engagement sessions, related to the potential ballot items and our report, for an additional fixed fee of \$3,000.00 that includes all fees and expenses. This fee is contingent upon the session taking place within a span of 5 calendar days. If desired, we will facilitate the three public engagement sessions for an additional fee of \$600.00.

Notes:

1. Firescope Mid-America cannot complete the required work without the full and candid cooperation of the District's employees, volunteers and Board Members. We will need the assistance of the Hyalite staff in identifying certain officials and other persons whose contributions to the effort will be important. This would include assisting with some scheduling of interviews while we are in Montana.
2. Firescope Mid-America will be interviewing individuals and officials in the process of information gathering. It is our policy that no information is directly attributed to an individual unless they ask for that to be the case. Also, we allow any interviewee to opt out of any list of those interviewed that may be included in any report.
3. If, in our opinion, elements of data or information cannot be verified with reasonable assurance of credibility, that data or information will not be included in any report. It may, however, be shared with the Hyalite staff and Board with the proper context.
4. Firescope Mid-America acknowledges that all work product and reports, written, recorded and/or transmitted electronically are the sole property of the Hyalite Rural Fire District. We will not share the written, recorded or electronically transmitted material with any other person or entity without the written permission of the Hyalite Rural Fire District. We further acknowledge that the materials may be subject to open records requests per Montana Statutes and District policies.

Submitter Contact Information:

Douglas P. Forsman, President
Firescope Mid-America, LLC
11024 NW 20th Street
Yukon, Oklahoma 73099-1242
Email: firefors2@gmail.com
Cell and Text: 501-757-0099

Revised Proposal submitted to the Hyalite Rural Fire District in this 23rd Day of June, 2026



Douglas P. Forsman, FIFireE
President



Hyalite Rural Fire District

Fire Chief's Report

July 2026

Prepared by: Fire Chief, Brian Nickolay

1. The Hyalite Fire District responded to a total of 58 incidents in June 2026. Our total call volume for 2026 as of July 1st is 360.
 - Total calls June 2025 - 73
 - Total calls June 2024 - 66
 - Total calls June 2023 - 51
 - Total calls June 2022 - 60
 - Total calls June 2021 - 60
2. Our current roster is at 43 members (effective 7/1/2026).
 - 1 Career Fire Chief
 - 1 Career Assistant Fire Chief
 - 2 Career Division Chiefs
 - 3 Career Captains
 - 0 Volunteer Captains
 - 1 Volunteer Reserve Captains
 - 10 Volunteer Lieutenants
 - 8 Volunteer Firefighters
 - 14 Volunteers Apprentice Firefighters
 - 1 Volunteer Reserve Firefighters
 - 2 Volunteer EMTs
3. We are continuing to work on our overnight command coverage shortages.
 - We currently have zero (0) of our needed five (5) volunteer captains.
 - We have six (6) of our new candidates for captain working on shadowing command shifts currently.
 - Our Training Captain and Recruitment and Retention Captain continue to work the modified schedule and cover a night of command each per week.
 - Myself, Assistant Chief Dahlhauser, Division Chief Malone and Division Chief Prato are working with our new candidates on shadowing. We still will provide coverage at night where we lack availability.
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 three (3) resident firefighters living at the Cottonwood Fire Station.
- Current Cottonwood Residents –
 - Sarah Shenk, Keegan Torsdahl, and Ashton Cornelius.
 - 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 June has focused on utilizing piercing nozzles for structure fires.
9. Our spring firefighter recruit academy has completed. Captains Trautmann and Leeper successfully graduated nine (9) new apprentice firefighters. Our new firefighters are responding to calls.
10. We will be performing our first compressed firefighter academy in August. This will include three (3) recruit firefighters. These three recruits are current members of the fire district now serving as EMTs. The goal will be to successfully put them through a consecutive fourteen-day academy to complete the State of Montana Firefighter 1 training and testing. This academy will be overseen and coached by our training division. If successful we will explore ways to continue and expand this model of firefighter academies.
11. We have begun the process of our annual Firefighter 2 academy. We have three firefighters going through the testing and certification process. The academy is being overseen and coached by our training division.
12. I continue to sit on the Headwaters EMS operational committee in Gallatin County. The operational committee will hold a full day workshop on July 22nd aimed at lining out several areas of a new ambulance system to include ambulance placement and service level. We will also be discussing interfacility transport and event standby.
13. Staff has been hard at work with our transition from ESO to First Due for our fire department software. This has been a large lift but we are nearing completion of the transition. Assistant Chief Dahlhauser has been overseeing the transition process.

14. We have begun to work with Streamline Web services for our new fire district website.
15. Division Chief Prato has been working hard to get our transition to Microsoft complete.
16. I am still on the Board of Directors with Montana State Fire Chiefs Association as a combination section director.
17. I am still on the Montana State Fire Chiefs Wildland Fire Committee.
18. I am still on the Montana Intrastate Mutual Aid Committee through the Montana Disaster and Emergency Services.
19. I am still on the operational committee for the Northern Rockies Coordination Group.
20. 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.
21. Assistant Chief Dahlhauser continues to chair the SOP committees with the Gallatin County Fire Council.
22. I am still a Gallatin County Deputy Fire Warden.
23. We had no firefighter injuries in the month of June.
24. All apparatus are in service.