ARCATA FIRE DISTRICT

MINUTES

Regular Board Meeting
September 10, 2026
5:30 p.m.
Location: 631 9th Street, Arcata
Arcata Fire Station Classroom

Board of Directors

***Nicole Johnson (Division 2)** - President, **Randy Mendosa (Division 3)** - Vice President,*
***Blaine Maynor (Division 1)** - Director, **Eric Loudenslager (Division 4)** - Director,*
***Jason Akana (Division 5)** -Director,*

CALL TO ORDER

The regular session of the Board of Directors for the Arcata Fire District was called to order by President Nicole Johnson at 5:30 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

The meeting continued with a quorum, and the following were present: President Nicole Johnson, Vice President Mendosa, Director Akana and Director Loudenslager. Director Maynor was absent.

Additional District administrative staff included Fire Chief Chris Emmons, Assistant Chief Ross McDonald, and Board Secretary Anali Gonzalez

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Board considered approval of the agenda. A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda.

Motion: Approve the agenda.
Second: A second was made by Director Akana
Roll Call: N/A
Ayes: Johnson, Akana, Mendosa, Loudenslager
Nays: N/A
Absent: Maynor
Result: Motion passed

CEREMONIAL MATTERS

Fire Prevention Week Proclamation
Staff presented the Fire Prevention Week Proclamation recognizing **October 4–10, 2026** as Fire Prevention Week and provided an update regarding preparations for the District's October 4 Open House at the McKinleyville Station. Staff reported that preparations were underway, including coordination with crews regarding station

cleanup, Logistics Team support, and vendor outreach. No public comment was received.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the proclamation recognizing October 4-10, 2026 as Fire Prevention Week.

Motion: Adopt the proclamation recognizing October 4–10, 2026 as Fire Prevention Week.
Moved by:
Seconded by:
Ayes: Johnson, Mendosa, Loudenslager, Akana
Absent: Maynor
Result: Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT/ ASSOCIATION REPORTS

Joan addressed the Board regarding several matters, including public notification of Board meetings, vegetation and fire-safety concerns associated with the recent South I Street/marsh-area fire, and potential fire-safety considerations associated with e-bikes and lithium-ion batteries in residential settings. She also briefly commented on the District's name.

Paul addressed the Board regarding his continued community outreach concerning emergency-response access in the Bayside/Highway 101 area. He reported contacting community organizations, public officials, and others to build awareness and support regarding the issue and discussed roadway and traffic-safety concerns associated with the current configuration.

No additional public comments was received.

Local 4981 Monthly Report

A Local 4981 representative reported on the recent emergency drill conducted at the new Cal Poly Humboldt student housing facilities. The representative discussed operational challenges observed during the exercise, including the number of critical tasks associated with an incident at a facility of that size compared with available response personnel.

The Board discussed emergency response considerations at the facilities, including staffing, evacuation and shelter-in-place considerations, building access, smoke movement, communications, and coordination with Cal Poly Humboldt. The Board expressed interest in receiving additional information regarding the drill and the District's ability to respond to a significant emergency at the facilities.

Discussion included potentially preparing a report and engaging Cal Poly Humboldt representatives regarding the findings. The Board discussed beginning with communication to the University and potentially conducting a future presentation or workshop.

Board Direction: Staff was directed to begin with outreach to Cal Poly Humboldt regarding concerns identified through the drill and to work toward additional discussion/reporting regarding the District's response capabilities and the facilities.

Arcata Volunteer Fire Association Report

The Arcata Volunteer Fire Association reported **71 volunteer hours for August**, including support for the Cal Poly annual drill, air show emergency response, fire-call monitoring and response, and CPR/First Aid instruction. The Association reported conducting two CPR/First Aid classes serving 13 students and provided updates regarding grant activities and Firewise projects. The written AVFA report in the packet confirms these activities.

The Association also reported planning for its holiday dinner on November 13 and discussed remaining drone-related funding and ongoing Firewise work.

No Board action was taken.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The Board considered the Consent Calendar, which consisted of the July 9, 2026 Regular Meeting minutes; August 13, 2026 Regular Meeting minutes; August 2026 Financial Report; correction and readoption of the surplus property resolution as **Resolution No. 26-351**; and **Resolution No. 26-352** updating authorized signers for District financial accounts. Final Packet 9-10-2026

No Board questions or comments were received.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Consent Calendar

Motion by: Approve the Consent Calendar as presented.
Second by: Director Loudenslager
Ayes: Johnson, Akana, Mendosa, and Loudenslager
Absent: Maynor
Result: Motion passed

DISTRICT BUSINESS

1. **Public Hearing – Finalizing the Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2026/27**

Staff reported that additional financial information and analysis were necessary before the District's FY 2026/27 final budget could be presented for adoption. The District's financial consultant requested additional time to review the available information and complete reliable financial projections.

Staff recommended continuing the public hearing to **September 24, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. at the Arcata Fire Station, 631 9th Street, Arcata**. The staff report confirms that continuing the hearing was intended to allow completion of the financial analysis while maintaining the public-hearing process before final Board action.

No public comment was received.

A motion was made and seconded to continue the public hearing.

Motion: Continue the public hearing and consideration of the FY 2026/27 final budget to September 24, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. at the Arcata Fire Station.
Moved by: Loudenslager
Seconded by: Akana **Ayes:** Johnson, Mendosa, Loudenslager, Akana
Absent: Maynor
Result: Motion passed

2. **Ratification of Financial Consulting Services Contract with Aaron Felmlee**
   Staff presented the financial consulting services agreement initiated by the Fire Chief with **Aaron Felmlee**. Staff explained that additional financial expertise was needed to assist with budget development, mandated fiscal reporting, financial analysis, projections, and related advisory work. The Board packet identifies these services and recommends ratifying the agreement and authorizing the Fire Chief to administer it.**Resolution No. 26-350 – Surplus Property**

The Board discussed the value of obtaining specialized public-finance assistance and the importance of reliable financial information for budgeting and longer-term District financial planning.

No public comment was received.

Motion: Ratify the contract initiated by the Fire Chief with Aaron Felmlee for financial consulting services and authorize the Fire Chief to administer the agreement in accordance with its terms.
Moved by: Mendosa **Seconded by:** Akana
Ayes: Johnson, Mendosa, Loudenslager, Akana
Absent: Maynor
Result: Motion passed.

3. **Review and Approval of Revised Policies and Procedures Manual – Chapters 1-3**

Staff presented Chapters 1 through 3 of the revised District Policies and Procedures Manual. Staff explained that the revisions were part of the District's comprehensive policy update and involved review by the Policy Review Committee, labor representatives, District administration, and Lexipol.

The Board reviewed the proposed chapters and identified several corrections and formatting issues. Discussion specifically included language in Policy 103, provisions concerning liability claims in Policy 206, and general proofreading and formatting corrections, including blank bullet points.

The Board discussed the importance of timely notification to the District's insurance carrier regarding potential liability claims and the collection of relevant information when an incident occurs.

No public comment was received.

A motion was made to approve Chapters 1 through 3 with the identified corrections.

Motion: Approve Chapters 1 through 3 of the Policies and Procedures Manual with corrections to Policies 103 and 206 and general proofreading and formatting corrections as discussed.
Moved by: Akana **Seconded by:** Loudenslager
Ayes: Johnson, Mendosa, Loudenslager, Akana
Absent: Maynor
Result: Motion passed.

4. **Government Relation Discussion/Action**

The Board received the Government Relations item for discussion. Staff explained that the standing agenda item provides an opportunity to discuss community projects, relationships with other governmental entities, and other matters affecting the District. The staff report specified that no action was required.

Discussion included the recent South I Street vegetation fire. Staff reported that the fire was wind-driven, threatened nearby structures, and was determined to be human-caused, although the specific cause could not be established. Staff also discussed coordination with local law enforcement regarding suspicious fire activity.

No public comment was received.

Action: No formal Board action was taken.

CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATIONS

2026 General Election – Notice of Candidacy Results/In Lieu of Election

The Board received correspondence regarding the 2026 General Election and the Notice of Candidacy Results/In Lieu of Election. It was reported that the Division 2 and Division 5 directors would continue for new terms and that a new director would take office for Division 4. The terms referenced will conclude in 2030.

SB 827 Fiscal and Financial Training

The Board received information regarding a fiscal and financial training workshop for directors. Staff discussed training requirements and indicated that an in-person training opportunity was available in Redding, with an online option also anticipated. Staff advised that additional information regarding training opportunities would be distributed to the directors.

Fire Chief's Report

The Fire Chief presented the monthly administrative report and provided updates on District activities, training, grants, capital improvements, interagency coordination, and notable incidents.

The Chief reported continued participation in regional meetings and coordination efforts, including meetings with the City of Arcata, Humboldt County Fire Chiefs, local law enforcement agencies, and the District's financial consultant. The Chief reported that an MOU associated with Measure Z funding had been signed, allowing the District to move forward with applications for eligible funding opportunities.

The Chief also reported on continued working-group activities, participation in the Rumble Over the Redwoods Air Show, command-and-control training for personnel, a strike team leader assignment, discussions regarding Highway 101 corridor improvements and potential impacts to emergency response, and coordination of the Honor Garden memorial ceremony.

Updates were provided regarding the District's unmanned aerial systems/drone program, the Board's staffing workshop, and capital improvements at the Arcata Station. Painting of the Arcata Station had begun, and station cleaning activities were being completed in preparation for the October Open House.

The Chief provided an update on several grant opportunities, including applications or funding requests related to a water tender replacement, training props, station alerting, and other District needs. The Chief also recognized continued Fire Safe Council activities.

The annual residence hall disaster drill was reported as successfully completed with participation from multiple fire agencies. The exercise provided training opportunities and highlighted staffing considerations. Drone operators continued training and flight practice.

The Chief reported **354.5 acting duty officer hours** and **162.5 acting company officer hours** for the reporting period.

The Chief concluded with a review of notable incidents during the month, including vegetation and structure fires, a residential sprinkler activation that successfully controlled a fire, vehicle and commercial fires, animal rescues, and a period involving multiple simultaneous emergency calls throughout the District and surrounding areas.

The Fire Chief continued the monthly report with additional information regarding notable incidents and District response activity. A residential travel trailer fire was reported in which the trailer was fully involved and the fire was spreading toward a milking barn. Responding crews extinguished the fire and prevented further spread to the barn.

The Chief reviewed call statistics, including common call types and locations. Approximately **33% of calls were reported as overlapping calls** during the reporting period. The report also included information regarding structure and vegetation fire responses and the frequency of calls at one- and two-family and multifamily dwellings. The Chief also provided an update on the District's new engine. Modifications and equipment-mounting adjustments were discussed, including efforts to improve accessibility and reduce potential strain associated with retrieving equipment. An air pack was returned to the captain's seat, additional equipment mounting was completed within the cab, and the engine was equipped with two radios to facilitate communications with other agencies and units.

The engine had been placed in service, with minor finish work and installation of additional mounts still pending. The Chief reported that Golden State Fire Apparatus and Pierce Manufacturing had addressed paint and metal damage that occurred during transport, along with other minor warranty-related items.

The Board and staff discussed holding a **push-in ceremony or similar public event** for the new engine. Staff reported communication with the Humboldt Area Foundation regarding recognition associated with grant funding. The Foundation requested inclusion in social media and public communications associated with the dedication. Discussion included potentially scheduling the ceremony approximately one week before the District's Open House to showcase the engine and help promote the upcoming event.

Committee Reports

FY 2026-27 Budget Committee

It was reported that the Budget Committee had an upcoming meeting scheduled for September 15, 2026. No additional report was provided.

Government Relations Ad Hoc Committee

There was no report.

Fire Chief Evaluation Ad Hoc Committee

The Fire Chief evaluation remained in progress. It was reported that documents were available and the committee's work was continuing.

Director Matters

A Director reported plans to attend an upcoming ceremony recognizing firefighters and law enforcement personnel and indicated an intention to represent the District at the event.

Additional discussion regarding September 11 remembrance activities followed.

Adjournment
The Board announced that the next regular Board meeting was scheduled for **October 8, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. at the Downtown Station**.
A motion to adjourn was made.

Respectfully submitted,

Business Manager / Board Secretary
Arcata Fire District