# MINUTES

## Special Board Meeting

**September 24, 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,* ***Eric Loudenslager (Division 4)*** *– Director,* ***Jason Akana (Division 5)*** *– Director,* ***Blaine Maynor (Division 1)*** *- Director,*

## CALL TO ORDER

The Special Meeting of the Arcata Fire District Board of Directors was called to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

## ATTENDANCE AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

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

Additional District administrative staff included Fire Chief Emmons, Assistant Chief Ross McDonald, Board Clerk Anali Gonzalez and Financial Consultant Aaron Felmlee.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

The Board President opened the initial public comment period for matters within the jurisdiction of the District that were not listed on the agenda.

There was no public comment.

## PUBLIC HEARING – FISCAL YEAR 2026–27 FINAL BUDGET

The Board continued the public hearing from September 10, 2026, regarding the District's Fiscal Year 2026–27 Final Budget.

Staff presented the proposed final budget and reviewed the District's financial projections. The Board discussed the projected operating deficit and clarified that the projected deficit would require the use of District reserves or contingency funds and that those funds were not included as operating revenue within the projections.

The Board discussed the proposed reduction in budgeted overtime. Staff explained that overtime had initially been projected at approximately 28% of salary and was subsequently reduced to approximately 20%. For comparison, staff reported overtime expenditures of approximately **$488,000 in FY 2024–25** and **$536,000 in FY 2025–26**, with approximately **$477,000 budgeted for FY 2026–27**.

Discussion included the relationship between overtime expenditures and staffing vacancies. Staff explained that filling two vacant positions was anticipated to reduce overtime needs while maintaining minimum staffing requirements.

The Board and staff also discussed potential future staffing strategies, including the possibility of additional staffing or floater positions to provide coverage for vacancies,

leave, and other staffing needs at regular pay rather than relying exclusively on overtime. Staff clarified that adding allocated positions would require future Board approval. No decision regarding additional positions was made as part of the budget hearing.

During public comment, a member of the public expressed interest in participating in future discussions concerning staffing. Staff acknowledged that staffing options remained under consideration and that no final decisions had been made.

The public comment portion of the hearing was closed, and the matter was returned to the Board for deliberation.

During deliberations, the Board acknowledged the significance of the District's financial projections and discussed the need for continued review of District finances and future expenditures. Appreciation was expressed for the financial review and assistance provided in developing a clearer understanding of the District's current financial position and projections.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the **Fiscal Year 2026–27 Final Budget** by **Resolution Number 26-353.**

**Motion:** Maynor; **Second:** Johnson

**Roll Call: Ayes;** Johnson, Maynor, Loudenslager

**Nays**:

**Absent:** Akana, Mendosa

**Motion Carried**

## ADJOURNMENT

The Board announced that the next regular Board meeting was scheduled for **October 8, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Arcata Station Classroom**.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the Special Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Anali E. Gonzalez

Anali Gonzalez
Clerk of the Board