

**CANYON CREEK
RURAL FIRE DISTRICT
Board of Trustees
By-Laws**

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Mission Statement

To provide fire suppression, fire prevention information, and emergency medical services within the District boundaries for the purpose of protecting the safety of human life and property.

Provide assistance to other rural fire districts, fire service fee areas, county, state and federal agencies under Montana Mutual Aid Agreements and other legal agreements as approved by the Trustees.

The Trustees and Fire Company members will operate as a team to protect the life and safety of each member while fulfilling this MISSION. All members will work within the team and follow the direction of the Fire Company officers and all Incident Commanders.

Board of Trustees By-Laws

SECTION 101 - The purpose of the Board of Trustees By-Laws are:

1. To define how the Board of Trustees governs its actions.
2. To implement the Mission Statement of the Canyon Creek Rural Fire District
3. To provide guidance to the Trustees, all volunteer fire company members and the public on the Canyon Creek Rural Fire District rules, and policies.

SECTION 102 - Arranging and Amending

These by-laws may be amended at any time by the Board of Trustees. Amendments, additions and deletions, after approval by the Board of Trustees shall be added to the master copy by the Secretary of the Board of Trustees. Amendments should be added and new copies distributed as necessary to keep all trustees, fire company members, and the public currently informed.

SECTION 103 - Authorization

The Canyon Creek Rural Fire District was created by the Board of County Commissioners of Lewis and Clark County under the adoption of the resolution as noted in the Commissioner's Journal No. 30 on Monday – August 10, 1959.

SECTION 104 - The Terms

"District" or "CCRFD" shall mean the Canyon Creek Rural Fire District.

"Board" shall mean the Canyon Creek Rural Fire District, elected or duly appointed Board of Trustees.

"Commissioners" shall mean the Board of County Commissioners of Lewis and Clark County

"Volunteer Fire Company" shall mean an organization of volunteer firefighters created under the authority of the board of trustees.

"Fiscal year" shall mean the 12 month period that begins on July 1 and ends on June 30 thereafter.

"Incident" shall mean any event for which the Volunteer Fire Company is officially dispatched to provide emergency medical service, fire fighting services, structure protection services, or other appropriate services directed by the Chief or an Incident Commander.

SECTION 105 – Powers and duties of trustees.

The Board shall be the policy-making body of the District and duties of the trustees are:

1. shall prepare and adopt suitable bylaws;
2. shall provide adequate and standard firefighting and emergency response apparatus, equipment, personnel, housing, and facilities for the protection of the district.
3. May form a volunteer fire company to accomplish our mission and to serve the community at the direction and pleasure of the Board.
4. may form a fire company that has the same duties, exemptions, and privileges as other fire companies for retirement purposes only;
5. shall prepare annual budgets and request special levies for the budgets. The budget laws relating to county budgets must, as far as applicable, apply to fire districts.
6. may enter into contracts as provided in 7-33-2107;
7. may pledge income to secure financing of the district as provided in 7-33-2109.
8. All money received by the trustees must be deposited in the county treasurer's office and credited to the fire district.

SECTION 106 - Board of Trustees

SELECTION AND TERM - Each trustee shall be elected or appointed in accordance with Montana Law. Generally the law states those terms shall be for 3 years and that not more than two positions will expire each year. If a trustee resigns before the end of his/her term, the board may appoint a successor. The successor will serve until the next regular election and then may run for election to complete the term of the trustee who resigned.

SECTION 107 – General Description of Trustee Duties

Each trustee will assist the other board members in conjunction with the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief to manage the development and implementation of Fire District and Fire Company goals, objectives, policies, and priorities. The trustees will oversee the budget of the Fire District as provided by revenues from taxes and other source of funding allowed under state law paid by the property owners of the District and/or through donations. The trustees will elect officers from their members at the first meeting after the annual general election, that currently being the May meeting of the board of trustees.

Examples of Important and Essential Duties:

1. Coordinate with other board members to acquire information needed to make decisions on topics brought before the board by the trustee Chairman and/or the Fire Chief.
2. Provide other board members with assistance in their duties when required.
3. Participate in decision making process on issues pertinent to the fire district and volunteer fire company
4. Must be able to attend scheduled monthly meetings held at the Canyon Creek Fire Station and special Board meetings and public information meetings as approved by the Board, except when excused for personal matters of priority.
5. Have a clear understanding of the legal responsibilities of the board of trustees under MT law.

OFFICERS OF THE BOARD ELECTED BY THE TRUSTEES:

Trustee Chairperson

General Description:

The trustees will elect a chairperson from one of the five (5) serving trustees for a one year term of office. The Chairperson will establish an agenda for each board meeting with input from the trustees and will administer all meetings of the Board of Trustees. Coordinate with the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief to determine necessary expenditures for training needs for the membership and maintenance and operation of the district equipment. The chairperson will work with the Trustees and the fire company in the development and implementation of district goals, objectives, policies, and priorities..

Examples of Important and Essential Duties:

1. Coordinate with the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief to correct deficiencies, implement discipline and termination procedures to be presented to the board for discussion and necessary action by the board.
2. Coordinate with the Fire Chief on matters pertaining to fire fighting personnel equipment needs and present those matters to the board of trustees for discussion and necessary action by the board.
3. Serve as liaison between the community and fire company to continuously monitor and evaluate the efficiency and functions of the department and identify opportunities for improvement.
4. Represent the Board of Trustees to other related agencies and community leaders.
5. Participate in decision making process on issues pertinent to the district and be willing to research and obtain information necessary to make knowledgeable decisions when required by the Board of trustees.

Trustee Vice Chairperson

General Description:

The trustees will elect a vice chairperson from one of the five (5) serving trustees for a one year term of office. The vice chairperson will manage and administer monthly meetings of the Board of Trustees, along with other duties necessary in the absence of the chairperson.

Trustee Secretary

General Description:

The trustees will elect a secretary from one of the 5 serving trustees for a one year term. The secretary will record the minutes from all meetings of the board of trustees and any other necessary documentation of district activity, provide copies of the minutes from the previous months meeting to the trustees for approval, maintain records of the minutes to be safely kept in a locked file at the fire station for public record.

Examples of Important and Essential Duties:

1. Keep accurate and up to date minutes of every monthly Board of Trustee meeting.
2. Coordinate with other board members to provide them with any necessary files or documents necessary to deal with pertinent issues.
3. Participate in decision making process on issues pertinent to the fire department and be willing to research and obtain information necessary to make knowledgeable decisions when required by the board.

Trustee Treasurer

General Description:

The trustees will elect a treasurer from one of the 5 serving trustees for a one year term. The Treasurer will manage and administer the financial operations of the district business as directed by the board.

Examples of Important and Essential Duties:

1. Keep accurate and up to date records of financial transactions within the district
2. Pay all debts incurred by the district and approved by the board, in a timely manner
3. Coordinate with other trustees to provide them with any necessary records pertaining to financial transactions.
4. Provide the trustees with timely financial statements, bank records, transactions, and the general financial status of the fire district.
5. Prepare a draft budget for review and approval of the trustees at the May board meeting to be submitted to the Lewis and Clark County Treasurer by July 1.
5. Coordinate with Lewis and Clark County treasurer on records of allotted tax revenues.
6. Make timely reports as required by insurance carriers, pay all premiums.
7. Participate in decision making process on issues pertinent to the fire district and be willing to research and obtain information necessary to make knowledgeable decisions when required by the board.

Section 108 – Open Meetings, Public’s Right to Know and Public Participation

Procedures for permitting the public to participate in CCRFD board meetings must follow the Montana Open Meeting Laws.

These procedures shall assure adequate notice and assist public participation before a final board action is taken.

A notice of a regularly scheduled board meeting and the agenda for that meeting should be posted three days or not less than 48 hours in advance. The notice should be posted on the fire station West side door and at the Canyon Creek General Store.

Assist public participation:

The content of an agenda needs to contain enough information to enable the reader to understand the subject matter to be discussed at the meeting.

The agenda for a meeting must include an item allowing public comment on any matter on the agenda or public matter that is not on the agenda of the meeting and that is within the jurisdiction of the CCRFD. However, the board of trustees may not take action on any matter discussed unless specific notice of that matter is included on an agenda and public comment has been allowed on that matter.

Agenda items will be placed on the agenda at the request of two (2) trustees. Trustees must submit the agenda item to the chairperson no later than 24 hours prior to the posting of the agenda.

No person shall be deprived of the right to examine documents or to observe the deliberations of all public meetings. Documents may be examined by appointment at the Fire Hall in the company of a least two trustees. Copies of documents may be provided for a suitable fee. Document request form must be sent to the CCRFD Board.

SECTION 109 - Board of Trustee Principles of Civil Dialogue

1. We provide a safe environment where individual perspectives are respected, heard and acknowledged.
2. We respect diverse opinions as a means to find solutions based on common ground.
3. We encourage creative approaches to engage in public participation.
4. We value informed decision-making and take personal responsibility to educate and be educated.
5. We believe that respectful public dialogue fosters healthy community relationships, understanding, and problem solving.
6. We acknowledge, consider and respect the natural tensions created by collaborations, change and transition.
7. We follow the rules and guidelines established for each meeting.

SECTION 110 - Personnel Ethics

1. The Board shall provide an equal opportunity for volunteer membership without discrimination, to all people regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, political affiliation, sex, sexual preference, marital status, or any factor that is not directly related to the essential functions of the Fire Company. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination.
2. The Board and the Fire Company will respect the individual's right to privacy under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
3. Members will not use their status in the CCRFD for personal gain.
4. Board members and Fire Company members may not be intoxicated or impaired by any illegal substance when present at any Fire Company training sessions, emergency calls, other official CCRFD meetings, or while operating any equipment or apparatus.
5. Board members and Fire Company members will comply with MT law regarding smoking in public places.

SECTION 111 - Board Meetings and Records

1. REGULAR MEETINGS - The Board shall fix the time for holding regular meetings and it shall be published according to legal requirements. Unless otherwise scheduled, meetings shall be held on the third Monday of each month, at 6:30 p.m. at the Fire Station at 7960 Duffy Lane.
2. SPECIAL MEETINGS - Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Chairperson or by the quorum. The Chairperson shall give all members at least two (2) days advance notice of the special meeting. Special meetings must be given public notice as required by law.
3. EMERGENCY MEETINGS – During an Incident or when it is properly deemed that time is of the essence, the chairperson or any other officer of the Board may conduct an emergency meeting of the Trustees by telephone, email, or in person with as many trustees participating as are available under the circumstances. Minutes will be kept. Normal quorum requirements do not apply.
4. MISSED MEETINGS – Board members and the public who are unable to attend a Regular, Special, or Emergency meeting may present their views regarding any item on the agenda in writing, by email or hardcopy delivered to any officer of the board for general circulation to all board members. These emails or letters, sent within 15 days before or after the meeting at the discretion of the sender, will become part of the minutes of the missed meeting.
5. VOTING ON AGENDA MATTERS - In the case of Regular or Special Meetings, a trustee may vote on motions and agenda items only if he/she is present at the meeting.

6. QUORUM - A majority of members of the Board shall constitute a quorum to conduct a meeting. A majority of the quorum will decide all matters.
7. RULES OF ORDER - Roberts Rules of Order shall apply unless the board approves another legal means of conducting meetings under parliamentary procedure.
8. RECORDS - The Board Secretary shall see that a record of all proceedings of the District Board meetings is kept. The record shall be filed in chronological order in a book provided for that purpose. The official District records shall not leave the Canyon Creek Rural Fire District Fire Station, except when required for litigation purposes. All records must be returned to the District.

SECTION 112 - Committees

SPECIAL COMMITTEES - Special committees of the Board may be appointed by the Chairperson . The Committee Chairperson of all District special committees shall be responsible for submitting written minutes on all meetings to the Board. The report shall include:

1. Date, time, and attendance.
2. Summary of committee proposals signed by committee members in favor of majority proposals, or any minority proposals.

SECTION 113 – Purchases for the Fire District

No trustee may obligate the District for any purchase in excess of \$50 without board approval. Replacement of expendable EMS or fire fighting supplies and the purchase of new equipment are addressed in the Standard Operating Guidelines and Policies.

SECTION 114 - Legal Assistance

The Board of Trustees may seek legal assistance from the County Attorney and/or private counsel.

SECTION 115 – By-Law Amendments

Amendments may be introduced by any member of the Board at a regular or special meeting called for that purpose. All amendments proposed must be in writing before they are adopted. The Board Secretary shall be responsible for updating District By-Laws.

SECTION 116 – New Board Members

All new board members shall be presented with a ring binder containing By-Laws, Policy, and all other manuals or forms required for members of the Board, and be asked to become knowledgeable of contents.

SECTION 117 – Use of District Buildings, Equipment and Grounds

For liability reasons, risk of property damage or loss, and for the safety of the general public, the fire company building and grounds shall not be used by the general public for any reason other than district related events. A fire company officer or trustee shall be present at all times during any such events.

BOARD OF TRUSTEE BY-LAWS

ADOPTION CLAUSE

The following By-Laws were adopted by the Board of Trustees on the

November 21, 2022

Peggy J. Justesen

CHAIRPERSON

Signed May 16, 2023

LYNNE

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Beth

SECRETARY

Jane Bagge

TREASURER

Richard E. Brady

TRUSTEE

Signed June 11, 2023