



Seeley Lake Rural Fire District
200 Firehouse Dr.
Seeley Lake, MT 59868
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
May 18th, 2026 - 6pm

- I. Pledge of Allegiance**
Led by Interim Chief Blaine Cowan
- II. Call to Order/Roll Call**
Present: Interim Fire Chief Blaine Cowan, Michael Bowman, Jon Kimble - Chair, Alyssa McLean - New Trustee, Mike Weigel - Trustee, Vickie Smith - New Trustee, Shirley Goudzwaar - Trustee
- III. Special award ceremony - Rossi and Kennedy**
Retiring after many years of service to SLRFD as responders, and as Trustees of the SLRFD Board, Scott Kennedy and Rita Rossi were awarded with plaques presented by Chairman Jon Kimble.
- IV. Introduction of new Board Members**
Chairman Kimble introduced Alyssa McLean and Vickie Smith, new Trustees appointed by acclimation.
Election of Officers
 - A. Shirley Goudzwaard nominated Mike Weigel for Chairman, with no additional nominations the nomination carried - Mike Weigel is Chairman
 - B. Mike Weigel nominated Vickie Smith for Vice Chairman, with no additional nominations the nomination carried - Vickie Smith is Vice Chair
 - C. Vickie Smith nominated Alyssa McLean for Secretary, with no additional nominations the nomination carried - Alyssa McLean is Secretary
- V. Correction and/or Approval of Minutes**
Goudzwaard Made a motion to approve the last meeting's minutes with the inclusion of 3 minor edits: Correcting the spelling of "Blain" to "Blaine", removing where it states "Jon Kimble is attending via zoom" (he was attending in person), and under Old Business > Financial Audit - correcting the figure that states \$4,700 to the more accurate number of \$4,479
- VI. Public Comments/Correspondence**
 - A. Letter of Correspondence from Scott Kennedy read by Jon Kimble. Letter is attached. Information regarding ownership of Fire house property included.
 - B. Office administrator Renee gave comments regarding positive feedback from the community walking in.
 - C. Jon Kimble read his letter of resignation resigning from the Board of Trustees.
- VII. Financial Report and Approval of Checks and Warrants**
Vickie Smith motioned to approve \$37,484 expenditure, Alyssa McLean seconded. Motion carried.

VIII. Reports

A. Call Volume

YTD 2025 - 94 calls

YTD 2026 - 95 calls

April, 2025 - 22 calls

B. Grants Update

Grants update: Michael Bowman and Chief Blaine Cowan are still working on the previously discussed grants.

Cowan reported that Bowman has submitted an application to MDT for a new ambulance. We are on the hook for 10% of the cost, we need to coordinate with the Fire Foundation to fund raise.

Cowan spoke to the president of the Firefighters association, and found out there is no limit on applications for their health and safety support programs.

C. Updates/Actions

1. Cowan is making a prioritized list of needs for the District to be presented to the board soon.
2. One volunteer has passed his A-EMT exam, meaning he can administer IV's and meds. Another volunteer is eager to start training.
3. Cowan is updating the district's training curriculum.
4. The final phase of the ISO re-rate was completed, full report is expected to take several months.
5. Cowan met with The Seeley Swan Fuels Task Force who know the forests and work on mitigating fires. Meeting them could dovetail into a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, which has not been updated in 12 years.
6. The district took part in the career fair at Seeley Swan Highschool where they set up a "stop the bleed" station.

IX. Old Business

- A. Cowan reports our numbers seem reconciled with the county, but they have revised the month of January six times, causing tedious line by line work for the office. It is possible we could start the year \$100,000 in the hole.
- B. Bruce Suenram from Fire Logistics Inc will be here at the June meeting to go over our assessment with us and answer questions
- C. Update on Chiefs Position: Mike Weigel reports that background checks were completed and have come back on both candidates. The committee is meeting in the near future to make recommendations, and then we will need a special board meeting for final interviews with the Board of Trustees. It is likely that the vote for the new Chief will happen in June.
- D. Community Integrated Health Proposal: In December we can start applying, and they have requested a community member be on the oversight committee.
- E. Budget 2nd Draft Review: Anticipated tax revenue \$280,539, approximately \$125,000 medical income. Changes from 1st draft: Decrease in training expenses to: EMS - \$1,000 and Fire - \$1,000

- F. Change from current billing company to Gold Cross billing company: The new contract/proposal states a fee of 7.5%, but Vickie Smith recalls the representative from Gold Cross stating 7%. Vickie Smith motioned to take 7 days to look over the contract and to verify the 7% commission rate and other contract aspects. Shirley Goudzwaard seconded. All were in favor for 7 days review of contract and answer submitted to Blaine by May 25th, 2026.

X. New Business

- A. Resort Tax (“Tourist Tax”) - Mike Weigel brought forth information about a potential resort tax, the first step being getting Seeley Lake re-registered as a resort area, utilizing the Fire District’s map. Tourist tax would only apply to things that cater to tourists like bars, restaurants, campgrounds. Elected officials would monitor said tax, could potentially bring it \$100,000 a year which could support SLRFD, Seeley Lake Elementary, and Sewer District. It does not raise property tax.
- B. Station 2 parking lot has a spot that is sinking from a previous installed water line. In conferring with Vince at Seeley Lake Water District we found out it is the district’s responsibility to repack and asphalt the trench ourselves. Vince recommends we look at having it resealed with asphalt so that it is a lasting fix. Asphalt company gives a ballpark quote of \$1500-\$2000 depending on if they have other jobs in the area already.
- C. Policy Review: Cowan presented sample SOP’s for Auxiliary Membership, Corrective Action, and Meeting Agendas with suggested modifications and edits for the Board to Review.
- D. Change of Officers for Banks - Motion was made by Shirley Goudzwaard to remove Kimble, Rossi, and Monahan as signers and add Weigel, Smith, and McLean. Vickie Smith seconded. Motion carried.
- E. Removal/Change of Turnout Lockers in Station 1 Bay: Due to the lockers being made of wood, mold is now a safety hazard and the lockers need to be addressed immediately. Mike Weigel suggested looking into pricing for proper Wire Rack lockers, and fund raising efforts that could help cover the cost.
- F. Paid EMT status to Stipend: Vickie Smith motioned to approve change from \$15 hour/30 hours a week pay, to stipend of \$60 per 12 hour shift to not exceed 84 hours a week. Mike Weigel seconded the motion. Motion Carried.

XI. Next Month Agenda Items

- A. Recruitment and Retention was unintentionally missing from the agenda, it will be added back to the next meeting’s agenda.
- B. Acquisition of new Turnout Lockers
- C. District Operations Assessment Overview

XII. Adjournment/Next Meeting

Jon Kimble motioned to adjourn, Alyssa McLean seconded. Meeting Adjourned.
Next meeting is June 15th, 2026