

APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
Northwestern Special Service District
May 12, 2026 at 6:30 PM
Central Fire Department – 155 E. Center St., Central, UT 84722

Board Members Present:

Mike Johnson – Veyo
Mark Cain – Central
Slade Hughes – Veyo
John Leavitt – Excused
Rosemary D’Amato – Central
Paula Guthrie, Board Clerk via Telephone



Fire Chief’s Present:

District Chief Guthrie (6:46 pm)
Central Chief Flores
Veyo Chief Larsen

Three members of the community were in attendance – Bruce Bissell, Gayle Cloud, and Victoria George, all are Central residents.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and an invocation from staff.

The minutes from the April, 2026 board meeting were discussed. A motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded, and passed unanimously, 3-0. Director Hughes arrived at 6:32 p.m., moments after the vote was taken.

Financial Report and Discussions

- PTIF (Public Treasurers’ Investment Fund): End of April balance: \$174,412 (earning ~3.8% interest); Current balance \$204,412 after Zions transfers. April interest earned: \$551.11.
- Zions Bank: End of April balance: \$157,838 after major bills (including Zoll AutoPulse). Current Zions balance now about \$104,000 due to transfers to PTIF.
- The Board agreed unanimously to keep \$20,000 minimum in Zions Checking & transfer at least \$10,000 to PTIF when balance reaches >\$30,000.
- Known larger cyclical expenses: Insurance quarterly (\$7,000 – \$8,000) and Pelorus quarterly (\$4,000).
- Conclusion: Board aligned on keeping \$20,000–\$30,000 in Zions and transferring surplus to PTIF.
- Major April payment: – CFD Zoll AutoPulse approx. \$23,495 (funded by Elks Lodge grant).
- Fuel for April: \$261
- Zions Savings (\$6,000+) moved to PTIF due to low interest from bank.

2026 Standby Fee Discussion

Outstanding standby fees are approx. \$70,000 (similar to prior years).

The Board discussed extending the grace period for 2026 Standby Fees by 10 days, from April 30th to May 10th due to delays in postal processing time at the Las Vegas USPS center. Late fees will be charged for payments received commencing May 11, 2026.

The Board considered Rebilling (second mailing) to unpaid accounts. Historical returns from second mailings are low; costs higher without mass-mail discounts. Many residents prefer amounts to be added to property tax bills (collected by the county). A motion to not rebill (no second mailing) was made, seconded, and approved unanimously. Instead, we will use Facebook/community pages and the district homepage for a generic reminder: late fees are now being applied (no specific dates to avoid conflicts with printed bills).

Submission of Missed Payments

This August we will request an updated list from the county; reconcile with Peloris, noting parcel sales/merges/splits and tag properties as improved vs. unimproved accurately; adjust where structures changed property's status.

Our target to submit our unpaid list to the County Treasurer is September 30 this year. We plan to compare the current-year unpaid list to the prior year to identify repeat delinquents and property changes.

2027 budget planning: Staff will start budget planning sessions by September 2026 at the latest; align on strategic goals for 2027; Aim to circulate drafts by October and finalize by November. Chiefs to hold a mid-year financial review next meeting.

The required 2025 NWSSD State financial audit has commenced. Auditor received our data set from Pelorus on May 6, 2026. Pelorus staff could not locate a formal depreciation schedule for 2024; prior entries estimated from earlier years. Director Cain will speak with the auditor about the necessity/impact of not having prior years depreciation.

The Utah State Auditor conducted annual training on April 24th in St. George. Director Cain attended. Topics included the budget process, preparation of the annual financial report and self-evaluation, fraud risk assessments, impact fee reporting, and reporting to Transparent Utah. Director Cain provided the training materials to staff members. The District is in good standing.

An MOU between Veyo Culinary Water Association (VCWA) and NWSSD on behalf of Veyo Fire Department to waive each other's fees, will be presented to VCWA for approval at their next board meeting (unknown date).

AEMT Practice in Gunlock Update

Our District Letter was sent April 14, 2026, to Santa Clara and Ivins City councils and mayors, discussing the need for approval to allow District AEMTs to practice in our Gunlock Service Area. Only two responses were received, both from Santa Clara council members; one defers to their fire chief/management on the issue and the other appreciated the information.

Critical incident May 7, 2026: 6-month-old child in Gunlock with breathing difficulty; response metrics reported: Santa Clara/Ivins ambulance response was 19.5 minutes! Even Dammeron Valley E131 took over 17.5 minutes to arrive. Had Gold Cross Ambulance been allowed to respond from Veyo, their response time averages only 7 minutes; Gunlock EMTs would have been <5 minutes if permitted to practice.

County Commissioners' role: Ambulance licensing boundaries may be reconsidered at Santa Clara's license renewal in August 2026. In recent meetings with District officers, the Commissioners indicated support for change, but no action yet; The county owns the Santa Clara ambulance.

The District encourages public input to Commissioners to realign boundaries for faster response. Enterprise Fire has agreed to supervise district medical personnel district-wide if boundaries allow.

Conclusion: Seeking boundary/MOU changes to enable faster first response and AEMT practice in Gunlock; awaiting the August 2026 licensing window and continued advocacy. Ongoing efforts to allow Enterprise Fire to supervise district EMTs/paramedics across the district, including Gunlock; separate concept to allow Gold Cross transport when closest.

Closed Session – The Board moved and approved to advance the closed session item (Agenda #15) due to quorum requirements. The Regular Meeting was suspended at 7:21 pm and Closed session held in the Chief's office; content not included in the minutes. This session was held pursuant to Utah Code §52-4-205(1)(a).

The regular meeting was reopened at 7:30pm

Station Chief's Reports:

Chief Flores – Central Fire Department – Reports 7 medical calls in April. The annual Mountain Man Rendezvous (SR-18 mm 25) was held in Central April 23-26. The late-April event was successful. Our Utility Honda UTV proved highly effective for event maneuvering. Volunteers worked four-hour shifts, engaged with the public, and received free meals from organizers. The event provided strong PR and facilitated interaction with out-of-state attendees and other agencies. Medical issues were minimal, with only three band-aids® dispensed.

A new 150k BTU heater and digital thermostat were installed in the bay, replacing the original 1992 unit. This heater is more efficient and can be set as low as 40 degrees, which should reduce gas and electric costs. Sublime Heating & Air and its representative, Brad, were commended for professional, efficient installation.

The wildland crew has returned and is conducting fuel mitigation work. The crew will help clean the Central cemetery on Thursday, May 14, 2026. They will also begin cleaning fire hydrants throughout the community.

Upcoming Training: A Zoll representative will provide AutoPulse® training on Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 18:00 at the Central Fire Department. All departments along SR 18 have been invited, including EMTs from all agencies and medical staff from Pine Valley. Cross-training is important since other agencies are more familiar with the Lucas device. Refreshments—pizza or cookies will be arranged.

There were 7 medical calls, 0 Fire-related calls, 2 Accidents on SR 18, one accident occurred at the Brookside intersection (Wells Fargo), involving a side-by-side and cross-traffic.

Chief Larsen –Veyo Fire Department – No fire calls in April, several traffic accidents and medical calls. The library kiosk project is moving forward and must be completed by month's end due to grant requirements. Placement will be on the sidewalk near the paramedic entrance and will not interfere with generator installation.

The brush truck was taken to a mechanic for an antifreeze issue. He suspected blown head gasket causing system over-pressurization. A higher-pressure cap and sealant were applied as a temporary fix; oil change completed.

We plan to purchase a 40-foot container and a carport. We are exploring auctions in Vegas and in Phoenix in June; Amazon is also being considered for carports.

District Chief's Report – Chief Guthrie; The Pack test is scheduled for this Saturday at 8:00 AM at Diamond Valley School; The District provided fire standby support for the Food Network at Homestead Ranch April 21-26. No incidents to report. We expect approximately \$6,000 in standby fees.

A proposal was submitted to provide a brush truck for a movie production which plans to burn a purpose-built church structure.

All Fire One and Fire Two certified personnel now have brand-new, custom-fitted gear; this has been an ongoing effort for 1.5 years. Non-certified personnel are not issued gear until certification is complete.

Directors / Staff Comments:

District Clerk Paula Guthrie: No comments

PIO Slade Hughes – No comments

Director Leavitt – Excused Absence

Treasurer Rosemary D'Amato – Director D'Amato asked the chiefs to identify needs for grant applications. Pine Valley successfully used a fund navigator, which locates and writes grants for a fee; they invested \$4,700 and have already received a \$10,000 grant. The Chiefs agreed to hold a conference call to discuss fleet-wide needs and other potential projects for grants (e.g., CIB grant).

Vice Chair Mark Cain – The required 50% deposit for installation of a new Generac 22KW generator at the Veyo Fire Station has been paid. Chief Larsen is awaiting an installation date. The invoice for the new heater at the CFD has also been paid.

A first response vehicle is needed for seven EMTs in Veyo. My request to St. George for a surplus F-150 was denied; their vehicles went to auction. My next step is to approach the county. Alternatively, we can purchase or lease a 3-year-old lease-return, low-mileage F-150 from a government dealership near Salt Lake City. Decision and pricing expected by next meeting; My target to have a vehicle by end of June 2026.

Most mobile radios are installed in our vehicles; one remains for the Brookside brush truck, which may be replaced soon. Chief Flores ordered new chest harnesses (nylon straps) for the Harris portable radios to improve on-scene handling; more will be ordered for the other departments by Chief Guthrie.

Director Cain proposed two long-term capital improvement projects:

1. **Central Station Expansion:** Add drive-through bays and housing for wildland crews above; requires property to be deeded to the department.
2. **West Station Extension:** Add two bays to house new vehicles, and possibly offering space to the sheriff's department for a District Substation. The Sheriff had expressed interest in this when we discussed the possibility last year.

A key consideration: whether new construction would require retrofitting the existing building with sprinklers, especially if sleeping quarters are added.

Chairman Mike Johnson – Veyo: Director Johnson, a Veyo Fire Department AEMT and firefighter, discussed the vast number of hours necessary for the various certifications. He is also please with the direction the District is headed.

Final Public Comments:

Bruce Bissell asked what the status of Brookside Fire Department staff was. Our previous captain recently retired. The Brookside station has only one active firefighter residing in the community and two more live outside the area. While a leadership candidate is being developed, a concrete plan for recruiting more local volunteers is needed to ensure the station's future viability. Volunteer recruitment locally is challenging. Brookside firefighters are currently training under Chief Larson. Most calls are medical, and response times are adequate with support from other departments.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:13pm.

Approved for Publication:

 /s/ Mike Johnson
Mike Johnson, Chairman

Date: June 9, 2026