



Hurricane Valley Fire District
202 East State Street, Hurricane, Utah 84737
Administrative Office (435) 635-9562



**Hurricane Valley Fire District Board
Meeting**
Thursday, September 17, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.
Fire Station #46
56 N Coral Canyon Blvd, Hurricane UT 84737

Board Members Present:

Board Chair LaRene Cox
Board Vice Chair Todd Sands
Board Member Wayne Peterson
Board Member Randy Aton
Board Member Robin Smith
Board Member Scot Pectol

Board Members Excused:

Board Member Paul Luwe
Board Member Dave Imlay

Staff:

Chief Joseph Decker
Deputy Chief Nick Wright
Clerk Aren Emerson
Legal Counsel Ben Ruesch

- A. Meeting Called to Order** – by Board Chair LaRene Cox at 6:00 pm
Invocation by Invitation – Board Member Wayne Peterson
Pledge of Allegiance – Board Vice Chair Scot Pectol
- B. Consent Agenda:** (Items on the consent agenda may not require discussion. These items will be a single motion unless removed at the request of the Chairman or Board Members.)
1. Declarations of conflict of interest - None
 2. Agenda
 3. Approval of Minutes: July 9, 2026
 4. Review Checks & Deposits July 2026 and August 2026

Motion: **Board Member Wayne Peterson:** Approval of consent agenda items consisting of; declarations of conflict of interest, approval of minutes from July 9, 2026, and review of checks & deposits from July 2026 and August 2026.



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Second: *Board Member Robin Smith*
Vote: *Unanimous* *AYE*

- C. **Citizen Comment & Request for Future Agenda Items:** All public comments are recommended to be submitted in writing and emailed to info@hvfd.utah.gov by **noon on the day of the meeting**. No action may be taken on the matter raised under this agenda item. This item is reserved for items not listed on this agenda. (Three minutes per person)

No public comments were submitted.

D. Business:

1. Discussion on Emergency Service Sales tax collection and property tax reduction

Chief Decker reviewed the Fire District's sales tax collections for the previous three months and the partial month of August, as reflected in the meeting packet. Collections to date totaled approximately \$1.1 million. Chief Decker noted that the months reported are generally among the busier collection months of the year and anticipated that collections for the remaining months would likely be lower but remain above approximately \$300,000 per month. He projected total annual sales tax collections of approximately \$3 million, noting that projections were based on estimates from the Utah State Tax Commission.

Chief Decker also reviewed the District's property tax reductions, noting that approximately \$469,230.54 was returned in 2025 and approximately \$716,781.47 in 2026, for a combined reduction of approximately \$1.1 million.

The Board discussed the anticipated impact of the new station and additional vehicle debt on the District's future tax position and the importance of considering these obligations when evaluating future tax reductions.

Chief Decker stated that the Board is anticipated to review the 2027 tentative budget at the October Board meeting.

2. Discuss – Vote on purchase of Fire Facilities Training tower for the Sand Hollow property

Chief Decker presented a proposal for the purchase and construction of a Fire Facilities training tower as part of the Fire District's planned facilities at the Sand



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Hollow property. The District solicited proposals from multiple companies and proposed selecting Fire Facilities for the project. The proposal included materials, freight, and labor, with tariff-related costs removed, for a total project cost of \$1,562,839. Chief Decker stated that the proposal was approximately \$90,000 less than the next competing proposal and provided a larger facility with additional training features, including three burn areas. The training tower is included as part of the overall Sand Hollow property project but would be constructed by a contractor separate from the new station.

Chief Decker explained that the project was originally anticipated to be considered in the following year; however, the selected company had indicated that significant steel price increases were anticipated within the next month. He also noted that the project did not involve federal funding and that the District maintains tax-exempt status.

In response to a question from Board Member Robin Smith, Chief Decker discussed the potential impact of training facilities on an organization's insurance rating as the organization grows. He also noted that mutual aid agreements with other agencies could provide access to training facilities when needed.

Legal Counsel Ben Ruesch expressed concern regarding whether a project of this size would be required to follow the State's formal sealed bidding process. At the request of Mr. Ruesch, Chief Decker explained that proposals had been obtained from two companies, both of which were participants in State procurement contracts. Chief Decker stated that, pursuant to the State Procurement code, purchases made through cooperative purchasing contracts administered by the State Division of Purchasing are not required to undergo the sealed bidding process. He explained that the State procurement process establishes contract terms and pricing with vendors and is intended to facilitate purchases by local governmental entities.

Board Member Scot Pectol expressed concern about proceeding while Legal Counsel had outstanding questions regarding the applicable procurement requirements. He recommended allowing additional time for Mr. Ruesch to review the applicable code and provide a formal recommendation.

In response to a question from Board Member Randy Aton, Chief Decker stated that delaying the purchase until the following month could result in an estimated 20%–25% increase in steel costs.



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Mr. Ruesch stated that the Board could approve the purchase contingent upon legal review and authorization.

Motion: *Board Member Scot Pectol:* Approval of the purchase of the Fire Facilities training tower for the Sand Hollow property, contingent upon legal review and if the review came back with information that the Board felt it necessary to have a special meeting they could reconvene.

Board Member Wayne Peterson added that if legal review determined the correct procedure had not been followed, the Board would not need to reconvene in a special meeting.

Second: *There was no second. The motion failed.*

Board Member Todd Sands asked about improving coordination with Legal Counsel in the future. Mr. Ruesch stated that he considered the matter an isolated circumstance.

Motion: *Board Member Randy Aton:* Approval of the purchase of the Fire Facilities training tower for the Sand Hollow property, contingent upon legal review and approval of the process used to purchase.

Board Member Wayne Peterson suggested adding a deadline of Monday, September 21, 2026, for completion of the legal review to the motion.

The addition was accepted.

Second: *Board Member Wayne Peterson*

Chief Decker explained the Fire District's process for soliciting proposals from vendors at the request of Legal Counsel Ben Ruesch. He stated that two primary vendors provide this type of facility and that both were listed on the State procurement contract site. The District provided both vendors with an opportunity to submit proposals and received proposals from each. Chief Decker was not aware of a third vendor offering the same type of facility.

Chief Decker reviewed the applicable State procurement provisions regarding the award of contracts without following the standard procurement process. Following the discussion and review of the applicable procurement requirements, Mr. Ruesch stated that the requirements had been met, the alternative procurement process was permissible, and the District's purchasing policy had been followed. Mr. Ruesch further noted that the training tower would provide a training resource for the Fire District and could contribute to improved ISO ratings.



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Board Member Randy Aton withdrew his motion.

Motion: *Board Member Scot Pectol:* Approval of the purchase of the Fire Facilities training tower for the Sand Hollow property.

Second: *Board Member Randy Aton*

Vote: *Unanimous*

AYE

3. Discuss on progress of the Sand Hollow Fire Station

Chief Decker reported that the Request for Qualifications process for the Sand Hollow Fire Station had been completed, with 14 contractor submissions received. The contractor pool was narrowed to six finalists, with hard bids due September 24, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. Chief Decker stated that the next phase would include contract negotiations, with the contract award anticipated to be presented to the Board at its October 8, 2026, meeting.

Chief Decker also reported that the District had completed the bonding process and received an Aa2 bond rating. Fidelity Capital purchased the bonds, and the District secured an interest rate of 4.3%.

Board Chair LaRene Cox noted the District's Aa2 bond rating and stated that securing the 4.3% interest rate was beneficial given the recent increase in bond rates.

In response to a question from Board Member Todd Sands, Chief Decker explained that construction would begin with the Sand Hollow station. He stated that the District was preparing to begin the design phase for the Kolob project, with groundbreaking anticipated in March 2027. Construction of the two projects is expected to overlap.

E. Board Member Reports

Board Vice Chair Todd Sands – expressed appreciation to Battalion Chief Dave Harmon for attending a Toquerville City Council meeting and providing information regarding HB 48 and the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) map requirements. He noted that, with assistance from the City Manager, Toquerville was able to complete the required map. Chief Decker reported that he had submitted an appeal to the State regarding the amount of property identified as high-risk WUI.

Board Member Scot Pectol – reported that LaVerkin and the Fire District were conducting a review of the city's fire hydrant systems to ensure they were operational.



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Board Member Wayne Peterson – reported that the Town of Leeds had received Firewise USA Community designation. He explained that the designation requires a three-year plan addressing wildfire fuel mitigation efforts and the establishment of an official board. He noted that the designation may provide eligibility for certain grants to support community mitigation efforts and encouraged other communities to consider the program.

In response to a question from Board Vice Chair Todd Sands, Chief Decker explained that the Firewise USA Community designation is intended to help communities reduce WUI risk. He stated that participating communities establish a board to conduct reviews and assist property owners with mitigation efforts. Chief Decker noted that while the District cannot lead the designation process, it is available to assist communities interested in pursuing the designation.

Board Member Robin Smith – had no report.

Board Member Randy Aton – expressed appreciation for the District's assistance with Springdale's WUI map and noted the reduction in the area identified as high-risk WUI.

Board Chair LaRene Cox – expressed appreciation to Chief Decker for his availability and assistance to the Board.

Chief Decker stated that he remained available to assist Board Members as needed.

F. Closed Session

The board did not enter a closed session.

G. Adjourn

Motion: **Board Member Randy Aton:** Motion to adjourn at 07:00 pm.

Second: **Board Member Robin Smith**

Vote: **Unanimous**

AYE



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Date approved: 10/05/2020

Minutes taken by Aren Emerson

LaRene Cox, Board Chair

Attest:

Aren Emerson, District Clerk