

YELLOWSTONE COUNTY FIRE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – JAN. 13, 2026

Meeting held Shepherd VFD Station #2.

1. Introductions made.
2. Minutes of the Nov. 18, 2025, meeting approved.
3. Treasurers Report: Larry wasn't in attendance; he gave the report on the agenda. Balance is \$421.32. The 2026 memberships dues invoices have been sent out to the departments. Larry asked for new P.O.Box stationery. Des office covers the cost of this.
4. Fire Warden/DES report: Offices moved to the John Oslund building. Located at the corner of N29TH and 3RD Ave North. The sixth floor is still under construction but is open for business. Phone numbers are the same. Everyone should have got grass contract money. No invoices to departments for IAM Responding DES covered the cost. New burn permits are underway in the new year. 9000 burn permits in 2025, less than 1% burn permits escaped to out of control. VFA grants were due February 1st. Next Nov. election jail expansion on the county ballots. DES local agreement Billings, Laurel, and county is in the works.

OLD BUSINESS:

5. Subdivision Regulations: Chief Ehlers got a list from departments that had dry hydrants, there is nothing standard in any of them. Billings have hose boxes at their locations but are now getting rid of them and carry what they need for connections on their trucks. Subdivision Regulations are being opened we can put in standard plan to make all dry hydrants the same moving forward. Fuego new subdivision had one engineered design, the department signed off on it. Shepherd hydrants have 6 inch for structure and 2 1/2 inch for wildland. It was voted on with a passed motion to have a new standard plan sent to the Subdivisions Regulations in the county. Chief Ehlers will get a standard plan for the county put together and send it to the departments for an email vote on final approval. Each of the dry hydrants have a RSID number with the county, they need to be reviewed to make sure each one is up to the new standards. Des also mentioned that there are subdivisions that are built in areas where there is no fire protection, language can be wrote up to advise the landowner that there is no fire protection and a letter will be given to the landowner, that states that during a structure fire someone might show up but also a chance that no one shows up to a structure fire call. Must people don't know this is the case. Grass contract is not to be used on structure fires, vehicle fires, and recuse. A motion was made and seconded, with a passing vote to write language up for new subdivision.
6. County Fire Plan Reminder: Derek just reminder Chiefs on the meeting on Jan. 31, We would be reviewing by laws, county fire plan, a new county fire plan to possibly replace the grass contract, and finance for the county fire plan. This is to update and possibly replace the 51-year-old plan that's in place now.

7. Water Tender Response: Chief Ehlers presented a department tender group. This plan doesn't include departments that have only wildland tenders. Custer was to be added to the east group and Molt has a tender that can be added to the west group. There's run cards are easy to change as needed. Chief Ehlers is going to rework the groups and then look for final approval for the group.
8. Burn Permit Language and Applicability: Derek calls to attention #4 on the copy of the permit that is given to everyone, 4 Daylight hours only. No fire shall be set between sunset and sunrise. If it appears that a fire will continue to burn after sunset, the permit holder or designee must notify the Fire Chief who has the jurisdiction for the area of your burn location. Inside of city there are no burn permits. In and around the Emerald Hills area there is no burning. Documentation is key to Revoke a burn permit from someone, on a fire escape and a fire that needs to be suppressed. Can be brought to a meeting to ask why permit was revoked.
9. Other New Business: Chief Ehlers wanted the group to know that with the IAM Responding program, you can tie your department into other departments, all that is needed is the department IAM Responding number. If you want to share you can give out your number, it is possible to be changed through the plan to share with all departments in the county. Shepherd gave out their number 536871088. NIFERS will replace NIFIRS on Jan 31. If a department wants help with the NIFERS fire reporting process, get with Derek and the county will be able to help with this. It was also mentioned that fire reporting is a state statute to report fire to the state. The state is reminding departments that this is state law. Departments can be audited on reporting and grant funding.

10. Agency Reports: **Billings Fire:** New fire network program very user friendly, started planning for the 2026 Airshow, this is the same weekend the Savannah Bananas baseball team will be in town for 2 games, Planning on being short handed over this weekend. Working with Fuego on Skyway drive calls. **Billings Airport:** NA, **Laurel:** nothing to report, **Molt:** Gave handout on Marriage Mutual aid, Biblical Principles to strengthen Marriages, been joint training with Fuego fire on structures, **Broadview:** nothing to report, **Fuego:** nothing to report, **Blue Creek:** Enjoying the second fall season, plugging away, **Lockwood:** Replaced AEDs went through others and they have 4 available for a department if they need, may need to change the pads and batteries, **Haley Bench:** nothing to report, **Shepherd:** working on ladder truck, going from a 50 foot to 75 foot truck, **Worden:** new members coming on board, **Custer:** nothing to report, **Amr:** NA **Sheriff:** Been busy, new people coming on, have had missing person reports and river rescues all ready this year, still have a couple dogs left that are looking for adoption home, **Dnrc:** Training calendar is out watch for the nomination dates and what instructor to send them to, VFA 50/50 grant is due Feb 1st, burn training project info and nominations will be coming out soon next year it will be in eastern MT, New fire business system is in place have been having training's on it these went out through email may have gone to junk email for it being through a third party, IRA for people and trainings into the system to make things easier, also this is how you will get payment on fuel, trucks, going away with hard copies, Cat camp is in Miles City this year June 19-21, **Blm:**

combined all into one federal unit, fire fuel reduction controlled burning will be happening in the county, will have the helo, vet and fuel crews this summer, **Fsts:** container fire props are halfway though completion, should have the burn trailer in April hope to be able to store at Lockwood, command sims training is finalized and out there for use, Tims is now required for FF1, by 2027 a 4 hour Tims class and 2 hour refresher every year for any highway traffic calls, with in 2 days there was a wrecker and fire truck hit on scene, flame prop propane tank and fuels liquids coming, Fsts has took over the MT Mutual Aid, page 9 on MT Mutual aid book is a list of people you can call for help if you want added to it let Jerry know, page 26 Initial actions notes and checklist, page 118 hazard zone command help list of command help people, any help needed reach out to Jerry he can help organize, trainings are booking fast reach out to schedule.

11. Next Council Meeting: March 10th Laurel