

**PALOS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
REGULAR MEETING  
March 10, 2026**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The March 10, 2026, Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order at 7:00 P.M. at the Palos Fire Protection District, Station 1, 8815 W. 123<sup>rd</sup> Street, Palos Park, Illinois.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Everyone in attendance rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:** On the call of the roll, Trustees Richard Nogal, Todd Thielmann, Gene Adams, and Ed Verdino responded as present.

**OTHER PRESENT:** Chief Gabriele, Deputy Chief Stukel, Recording Secretary Dana Fischl, Attorney Thomas Courtney, and fire station personnel are also in attendance. James Howard from Governmental Accounting Inc. is in attendance via Zoom.

Attorney Courtney advised the board that, at this time, to make a motion to reorganize the board of trustees.

Trustee Verdino made a motion to reorganize the board of trustees, designating Richard Nogal as the new President of the Board, Todd Thielmann to retain his position as Secretary, and Gene Adams to remain as the Treasurer.

Trustee Adams seconded this motion. On a roll call vote, the motion passed. A new board has been organized

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Trustee Nogal asked for a motion to approve the open session minutes of February 17, 2026, regular meeting, as written. Trustee Verdino made the motion, to which Trustee Thielmann seconded. On a roll call vote, the motion passed.

Trustee Nogal asked for a motion to approve the closed session minutes of the February 17, 2026, regular meeting as written. Trustee Verdino made that motion, and Trustee Thielmann seconded. On a roll call vote, that motion passed.

**TREASURER REPORT:** James Howard presented the Treasurer's Report and did an excellent job of explaining the District's Financial Analysis for the 10 months ending February 28, 2026, and the Summary of Revenue and Expenditures.

**Revenue Highlights** indicate that we are 83% through the budget year and 54.0% of the total budget.

- Collected \$3,127,524 or 44.9% of the budget (1st Major Installment(s) from Cook County).
- Collected \$952,911 or 83.7% of the budget in Ambulance Fees.
- Collected \$25,706 or 64.3% of the budget in Personal Property Replacement Taxes.
- Collected \$202,525 in interest, or 122.7% of the budget.
- Collected \$37,162 or 148.6% of the budget for Fire Recovery

**Expenditure Highlights** convey that we are at 76.8% of the total budget (excluding transfers).

- Operating expenditure is \$6,791,323 or 77.2% of the budget.
- We have made 11 of 12 Health Insurance Payments.
- Paid Personnel is \$4,696,671 or 86.5 % of the budget.
- Debt Service & Capital Expenditures: \$129,123 or 30.9% of the budget.
  - St 2 Roof and Skylights = \$91,400
  - Station Alerting Installation = \$23,145
  - Ambulance 10 Loan=\$10,000 (9 of 10)

President Nogal stated that the district had \$443,682.18 in payroll and \$399,324.78 in accounts payable. President Nogal asked for a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Trustee Adams made that motion, and Trustee Verdino seconded. The motion was carried by a roll call vote.

**PUBLIC COMMENTARY:** None

**CHIEF REPORT:**

- The district responded to 219 calls in February. Total call volume is 552 for 2026
- Image Trend is having issues pulling data for response times. Image Trend to resolve this issue by March 28<sup>th</sup>.
- The district received another \$502,893.57 in tax dollars. We are expecting more sometime in April.
- The communication microwave was replaced on March 6<sup>th</sup>. The cost to the district was \$1000 deductible.
- A promotional ceremony is planned for April 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 pm, right before the 7 pm board meeting scheduled. The ceremony and the meeting will take place at the Village of Palos Park.

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- The Battalion Chief promotional process has officially been posted. We have 2 Lieutenants challenging the exam. The final list will be completed and posted by June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026.
- Full-Time Testing is still ongoing. We have 17 candidates who have applied and passed the test. The application period ends March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026.
- FF David Vodnik graduated from the Fire Academy on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026. We are proud of the hard work he has done in the Academy and look forward to him being back on shift.
- Deputy Chief Stukel and I attended a meeting with Northwestern Hospital. They presented the idea of a mobile stroke unit that will respond from the hospital to a stroke victim's home. This is already having great success in Central DuPage Hospital. The plan is to be fully up and running by the summer of 2027.
- We were experiencing portable radio issues. Lt. Queen reached out to Cook County 911 Dispatch, and within a few hours, they dropped 10 new batteries. We are extremely grateful for their quick response and will now be good on batteries until the full transfer of dispatch is complete.
- I received an email from Sean Casten about a Community Project Funding grant opportunity. A conversation with the Chief of Staff confirmed that our Fire Stations would qualify since they are considered public buildings funded by tax dollars. I received letters of support from State Representative Mary Gill, Cook County Commissioner Sean Morrison, Palos Township Supervisor Colleen Schuman, and Trustee Rick Nogal. I submitted the application, due on March 9<sup>th</sup>, requesting \$6,000,000.00 for renovation costs for both Station 1 & 2. We should hear back with approval or denial sometime early next year.
- I have officially been accepted to the Executive Fire Officer Program with the National Fire Academy. This program is 2 years long and is the highest level of certification any Firefighter can receive in the country. I will attend the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland, four times throughout the two years. This is an elite, very difficult program to be accepted into. Last year, only 1 person was accepted from Illinois. A total of 163 people from Illinois have graduated from this program since 1987. I am very much looking forward to this opportunity.

Brief discussion ensued.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- a. **Discussion and possible board action-Local #4480 successor CBA**  
To be discussed in closed session.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. **Re-appointment of Michael Gabriele to the Palos FPD Pension Board, effective May 1st, 2026, through April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2029.**

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Trustee Nogal asked for a motion to reappoint Michael Gabriele to the Palos FPD Pension Board for a term from May 1, 2026, through April 30, 2029. Trustee Thielmann made that motion, and Trustee Verdino seconded. On a roll call vote, that motion passed.

Trustee Adams proposed that Trustee Verdino serve as a consultant on behalf of the Board of Trustees with David Heidi of RBC Investments.

Trustee Nogal asked for a motion to amend the agenda to allow the proposal to be moved.

Trustee Thielmann made the motion to amend the agenda. Trustee Verdino seconded. On a roll call vote, the motion passed.

Trustee Nogal asked for a motion to appoint Trustee Verdino as the board's investment liaison with our investment advisors. Trustee Adams made that motion. Trustee Thielmann seconded. ON a roll call vote, that motion passed.

Trustee Nogal asked for a motion to go into closed session for contract negotiations, full-time negotiations, and/or matters of legal counsel and possible litigation at 7:38 pm. Trustee Thielmann made that motion, and Trustee Verdino seconded. On a roll call vote, that motion passed.

Back in open session at 8:26 pm.

**ADJOURNMENT:** With no further business to bring before the Board, President Nogal moved to adjourn the open session at 8:26 pm. Trustee Thielmann made that motion, and Trustee Verdino seconded. On a roll call vote, the motion passed.

The next regular meeting of the Palos Fire Protection Board of Trustees will be held on Tuesday, April 21, at 7:00 p.m. This meeting will be held at 8999 W. 123<sup>rd</sup> Street.

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