

**ROBERTS PARK FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
FEBRUARY 10, 2026  
MINUTES**

**CALL TO  
ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Roberts Park Fire Protection District Board of Trustees was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Bernardoni at Station #1, 8611 S. Roberts Road, Justice, Illinois, for the purpose of conducting all regular business of the District, proper notice having been given and posted accordingly.

Secretary Stratakos led the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:**

President Brian A. Bernardoni

Secretary Steve Stratakos

Treasurer Dan Borst

Chief Christopher Spoo

Executive Advisor Jeff Dees

Commissioner Tim Dooley

Commissioner Ken Osborne

Commissioner Ron Weszelits

**Others Present:** On-Duty and Off-Duty FF/PMs, OM Stacey Collaros, Attorney Vlado Vranjes

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GUESTS**

None.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

President Bernardoni opened the floor for public comments at 6:01 p.m.

President Bernardoni addressed the public and shared a traumatic experience involving his daughter's anaphylactic reaction in Times Square. He thanked Chief Spoo for his calm assistance and explanation.

President Bernardoni closed the floor for public comment at 6:06 p.m.

Motion to close the floor for public comments was made by Secretary Stratakos and seconded by Treasurer Borst.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.

Motion carried.

**CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

Office Manager Stacey Collaros commented on a notice from Cook County regarding the past due property taxes on the leasehold cell tower property. SBA Communications has been notified and we are awaiting confirmation of payment.

President Bernardoni commented on a FOIA request from Judiciocracy.com and guidance from the attorneys at Del Galdo Law Group. This request has been received by multiple government and taxing agencies throughout the state and country. Attorney Tiffany Nelson-Jaworski will advise on the response for compliance. Chief Spoo noted that there is a complaint with the ARDC regarding this request.

**BOARD APPROVAL**

***Minutes***

Motion to approve the Open Session Minutes of January 13, 2026, was made by Secretary Stratakos and seconded by Treasurer Borst. Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.

Motion carried.

### ***Accounts Payable/Treasurer's Reports***

Motion to accept the Accounts Payable and Treasurer's Report as presented for the month of January 2026 was made by Treasurer Borst, seconded by Secretary Stratakos. (Accounts Payable January 2026: \$210,270.18; Payroll January 2026: \$272,903.10) Roll Call Vote – Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.

Motion carried.

### ***Financial Report – January 31, 2026***

Review of Financial Report by video call by James Howard, Gov Accounting

An overview of the Financial Report was presented for the 9 months ending January 31<sup>st</sup> at 75% through the fiscal year. Mr. Howard commented on Cook County tax distribution continued delays, and CPI came out at 2.7%. Ambulance billing is strong at 83% of budgeted, but tax distributions are behind at 49%. We are awaiting an update on the TAE website. GEMT cost is the significant reason for the upcoming budget amendment. Mr. Howard stated that we are using reserves.

Chief Spoo commented on the amended budget and public hearing at the next Board of Trustees meeting.

Motion to approve the Financial Report for the month of January 2026, Budget & Investment reports as presented, was made by Treasurer Borst, seconded by Secretary Stratakos. Roll Call Vote – Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.

Motion carried.

## **REPORTS**

### ***Fire Chief's Report:***

Incidents: January 2026

- Total incidents: 361
- 68% EMS
- 42 Invalid Assists
- 19 MVA's in District
- Aid Given/Received: 27/15
- I294: 13 Responses
- Lyons Township: 199 Responses
  - 55 in the Trace
  - 24 in Sterling Estates
  - 2 in Ashbury Woods
- Palos Township: 117 Responses
- Forest Preserve: 5 Responses

Personnel:

- Currently processing our next full-time candidate, Sofia Letizia.
- A new group of part-time members have completed their orientation training.
- The grievance has been resolved and the promotional testing for Battalion Chief will be scheduled.

Finances:

- We did receive a little tax money from Cook County.
- The first tax bills for tax year 2025 will be going out at the end of this month and due April 1<sup>st</sup>.
- We have been working with James Howard to amend the budget.
- Requested that all discretionary spending be reviewed.
- We are meeting with IPRF next month for a Loss Control discussion.

- We are meeting with our insurance broker next Wednesday to discuss insurance renewals.

#### Grants:

- Awaiting decision on any grants.

#### Operations:

- Engine 302 is back from repairs.
- Tower 305 is out of service for repairs at Cummins. Estimate is shy of \$16,000.
- Engine 303 will need to go in for repairs once Engine 305 repairs are completed.

#### Training:

- 470 hours of training completed by members.
- Members attended a Rope Assisted Search Class in Chicago Ridge.
- Members are working on annual HR training.
- President Bernardoni, Treasurer Borst, Don Fontana, Stacey Collaros, and Chief Spoo all attended the NIAFPD conference.
- Chief Spoo attended a class on emergency preparedness offered by Cook County EMRS.

#### Community Risk Reduction

- Reviewed CPR and AED usage with the City of Hickory Hills.
- Inspector Spoo is working with the City of Hickory Hills to address a complaint that we received regarding a fire code issue at a building in our district.
- Annual report is nearly complete and this will be the first report published in decades.

#### SWAT:

- Chief Spoo received the “Commander’s Award” from the team for his contributions.

There were questions and comments from the Board of Trustees regarding lift assists and private residences vs. nursing homes.

A motion to accept the Chief’s Report was made by Secretary Stratakos and seconded by Treasurer Borst. Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.

Motion carried.

Annual Report materials were presented by Chief Spoo and the final published report will be next month. Chief Spoo emphasized detailed improvements in financial management, training, community engagement, and following best practice. Total incidents were 4709 in 2025. There were 2018 calls in Justice and 1803 in Hickory Hills. Ambulance Calls-69%; Fire Related-21%; Lift Assists-10%. Friday is the busiest day of the week; 10:00 a.m. is the busiest time of day. Increased training and community risk reduction items were highlighted, including the Santa Run and Project Fire Buddies. Awards and citations received by the members were mentioned. Then Chief Spoo review the administrative changes made since June of last year, including bringing in James Howard, Gov Accounting, passing a balanced budget, and streamlined accounts payable and payroll processes.

The members of the Board of Trustees thanked Chief Spoo for the Annual Report and continued progress toward best practice and open communications.

#### **POLICY REVIEW**

Policy report by Executive Advisor Dees was accepted as written. Advisor Dees stated that there is a summary of changes from month to month available in Dropbox.

A motion to accept the report of Executive Advisor Dees was made by Secretary Stratakos and seconded by Treasurer Borst. Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.

Motion carried.

***Commissioners:***

Commissioner Osborne stated that there was a resolution to the grievance regarding the Battalion Chief testing. They are in the process of scheduling for the promotional testing. There will be an edit to the current union Bargaining Agreement/Contract regarding the promotional testing process.

***Attorney:***

None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

President Bernardoni commented on the importance of continuing education and the upcoming Legislative Fire Service Day on March 25, 2026. President Bernardoni commented on items he received from the West Central Municipal Conference, regarding legislation for home rule status. He will be seeking approval to become a member.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Legal Notice of Public Hearing for the Amended Budget and Appropriations Ordinance.  
A motion to approve the publication of the Legal Notice of Public Hearing was made by Secretary Stratakos and seconded by Treasurer Borst. Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.  
Motion carried.

- B. The Fire Inspection Program update was presented by Fire Inspector Mark Spoo. Inspector Spoo stated that the current Intergovernmental Agreement with the city of Hickory Hills has a flat payment of \$10,000 to Roberts Park and North Palos Fire Districts combined. He is proposing a fee for service program for fire prevention activities. Inspector Spoo would like approval to engage with the City of Hickory Hills in conjunction with North Palos to establish a new Intergovernmental Agreement or modify the existing agreement to switch to a fee for service program. We would offer the same to the City of Justice, however they handle most of their own fire prevention activities. North Palos will receive compensation for fees charged on their side of Hickory Hills. Roberts Park would receive the fair compensation for fees charged on our side of Hickory Hills. The city would only have to pay for services rendered.

Chief Spoo stated that the negotiation team would include Inspector Spoo, Assistant Chief Hughes of North Palos and Chief Norvilas of North Palos and himself. Chief Spoo stated that this model would be agreeable to everybody.

A motion to authorize the establishment of a team to begin negotiations for a Fire Inspection Program and a preliminary establishment of rates was made by Secretary Stratakos and seconded by Treasurer Borst. Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.  
Motion carried.

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

President Bernardoni again thanked Chief Spoo, Don Fontana, Treasurer Borst and Stacey for attending the NIAFPD Conference. President Bernardoni also stated that he remains as Secretary of the NIAFPD.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

President Bernardoni opened the floor for public comments at 7:06 p.m.

With no comments, questions, or concerns, President Bernardoni closed the floor for public comment at 7:06 p.m. Motion to close the floor was made by Treasurer Borst, seconded by Secretary Stratakos. Roll Call Vote – Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.

Motion carried.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

None.

**CLOSED SESSION**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 p.m. was made by Secretary Stratakos and seconded by Treasurer Borst.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.

Motion carried.

*Open Session Minutes prepared by Stacey Collaros, Office Manager*

*Approved March 10, 2026*