

FOURTEENTH MEETING

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Fremont, State of Colorado, met in Special Session on July 8th, 2026, at 615 Macon Avenue, Room LL3, Fremont County Administration Building, Cañon City, Colorado. Chairman Bell called the meeting to order at 9:00 am

Debbie Bell	Commissioner	Present
Dwayne McFall	Commissioner	Present
Kevin Grantham	Commissioner	Present
Justin D Grantham	Clerk and Recorder	Present
Eric Bellas	County Attorney	Present
Tony Carochi	County Administrator	Present

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Grantham moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner McFall seconded the motion. Upon Vote: Commissioner Grantham, aye; Commissioner McFall, aye; Commissioner Bell, aye. The motion carried by unanimous consent.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Consideration of Resolution Extending Local Disaster Declaration for Aspen Acres Wildland Fire

Commissioner Bell explained that the fire is burning across almost 100,000 acres due south of Fremont County. Fortunately, the fire has not reached the Fremont County line, but because it is in range of severe ash and embers, the incident management team called for an evacuation of Rockvale, Williamsburg, and Coal Creek. There isn’t much new information the commissioners can share, since the fire is burning in Custer and Pueblo County.

County Attorney Bellas remarked that Resolution No. 15 enables the county to access additional resources. It activates local memoranda of understanding to make resources available from neighboring counties and partners in the area. It also alerts the state and makes additional resources available from the state. Specifically in this case, due to the size and its extension across multiple jurisdictions, it also enacts federal funding and resources. Fremont County Airport is a pivotal asset during this wildfire, supporting several models of helicopters and other large aircraft. He also commented that the purpose of the end extension date is that July 29th is the next regularly scheduled Board of County Commissioners meeting.

DHS Director Tonia Sutton approached the podium to share information about resources available to Fremont County citizens in need. She began by thanking the board for approving this disaster declaration, which also allowed her to open additional funding, and Attorney Bellas for overseeing it to ensure everything was filed correctly. One of the programs it opened was the adult financial population. These programs are specifically designed to aid the needy, the disabled, and the elderly population. The funds can be accessed by those who have previously been approved for the grant. All eligibility requirements would have been completed and approved prior to this disaster declaration. Those individuals now have access to an additional \$2,000 for food, shelter, clothing, transportation, personal care items, or medical care due to the disaster. The second resource is the Colorado Works program, which is like TANIF, and this applies to families with one or more children, including pregnancy. This does not add additional funds to the Fremont County budget, but it allows easier access for those who are in need because of this disaster.

Commissioner Bell reminded citizens that Pathfinder Park is currently a Red Cross shelter, so many are volunteering to take care of animals, people, cooking meals, and anything else that is needed.

Pam Hardy lives in the Los Pinos Subdivision, and said they attended the meeting in Pueblo to hear information on why they are ordering an evacuation for Rockvale, Williamsburg, and Coal Creek and understood why. Their concern lies with neighbors who decided to stay and not evacuate, who have

reported random people driving into the neighborhood and loitering. They also said a known neighbor who has been reported vandalizing previously has already been seen causing destruction.

Commissioners Bell and Grantham expressed concern as well since they have heard reports about Pueblo and both encouraged her to keep in touch with the Sheriff's Department.

Laura Bratt lives in the evacuation zone and was away on vacation July 1st through the 7th. Her daughter was the only one available to drive to the property and retrieve items. She could not find her vital asthma medication, and she has attempted to contact the sheriff's department to receive assistance and has not been successful. She requested short-term emergency access to her home.

Commissioner Bell explained that they do not have the authority to grant access, but they will speak with the people who can approve and facilitate that request.

Commissioner McFall announced that Pathfinder Park is full; they have nearly 500 animals and every feed for every animal in abundance.

Mark Anne Komar inquired about passes for people to get back into the evacuation zones.

Commissioner Bell responded that those are for areas the fire has already burned through, so Fremont County does not plan to implement this program.

Commissioner McFall moved to approve Resolution No. 15 series of 2026, extending the disaster declaration regarding the Aspen Acres wildfire to midnight on July 29th, 2026. Commissioner Grantham seconded the motion. Upon Vote: Commissioner McFall, aye; Commissioner Grantham, aye; Commissioner Bell, aye. The motion carried by unanimous consent.

Commissioner Bell adjourned the meeting at 9:32 am.

To view the YouTube Video for Commissioner Minutes, go to the following website:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ml6n6Pa-kNA&t=161s>

Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners