



Public Safety Commission Meeting Minutes

Richard Morton
Trevor Knotts
Robert Dziubla
Andy Powell
Laurie Van Court
Steven Goedecke
Steve Thayer
Clark Hammelman

Thursday, January 8, 2026

3:00 PM

Castle Rock Municipal Courtroom
100 Perry St., Castle Rock, CO 80104

This meeting is open to the public. Please note that all times indicated on the agenda are approximate and interested parties are encouraged to be present earlier than the posted time.

The Public Safety Commission meets monthly at the Town of Castle Rock Fire & Rescue Headquarters or the Police Department.

Call to Order and Attendance

Chairperson Hammelman called the meeting to order at 2:58 p.m.

Present 6 - Trevor Knotts, Richard Morton, Robert Dziubla, Laurie Van Court, Steve Thayer, and Clark Hammelman

Not Present 2 - Andy Powell, and Steven Goedecke

Attendance 4 - Laura Cavey, Oren Bersagel-Briese, Jack Cauley, and Kim Stremel

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Morton moved to approve the December, 4 2025 minutes. Ms. Van Court seconded the motion; the motion carried.

Yes: 6 - Knotts, Morton, Dziubla, Van Court, Thayer, and Hammelman

Not Present: 2 - Powell, and Goedecke

[PS 2025-033](#) CRFD November Report

Attachments: [CRFD November Report](#)

Fire Department Report

Fire Department Report

Chief Bersagel-Briese invited Commission members to attend the Castle Rock Fire Department (CRFD) Awards Dinner. Commission members are asked to RSVP to Lori Kania at the Fire Department.

NERIS Update

The Chief provided an update on the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS), a software system developed by UL Laboratories and the Fire Safety Research Institute. NERIS is a national reporting database required by FEMA, and participation is necessary for agencies to remain eligible for grant funding. The system generates real-time data for the fire service and is anticipated to add only a few minutes to call reporting.

Commission Member Morton asked whether CRFD receives grant funding. The Chief confirmed that CRFD does receive some grants, including funding for LUCAS devices used with breathing apparatus. Grant applications are reviewed by a scoring and evaluation team.

Fire Conditions and Operations

Dry weather conditions continue to increase fire danger, and the long-term forecast does not indicate significant moisture increases in the near future. Blasting operations are occurring in the Ridge and Plum Creek areas as part of residential development. These activities are monitored by the Fire Department.

Station 156 and Apparatus Updates

- Station 156 continues to progress as planned.
- Financing is expected to be finalized within the next month.
- The project is anticipated to be presented to Town Council between mid-February and March.
- Final acceptance of Pierce apparatus is expected in February.
- Estimated completion of Station 156 is summer 2027.
- Personnel are in place to staff the new station.

Training, Staffing, and Leadership Development

- Command staff will attend leadership training during the week of January 12.
- A leadership consultant is scheduled to begin work with the department in February.
- The department is launching a professional development initiative focused on soft skills over the next several months.
- A transition academy for newly graduated fire academy recruits began in January. They will move online later in the month.
- Due to improved/early staffing levels, four firefighters will be sent to paramedic school.
- The new Division Chief of Logistics began on January 5.
- Firefighter/Paramedic Mike Zukowski retired in December after 26 years of service with CRFD.

2025 Year-to-Date Statistics

- Overall call volume increased by 4.6%, consistent with the past three years.
- 96 fire incidents
- Approximately 4,700 EMS incidents
- Station 154 had the busiest engine, responding to approximately 2,400 calls.
- Firefighters train an average of three hours per day, totaling more than 10,000 in-person training hours department-wide.
- The Life Safety Division completed approximately 2,350 inspections.

EMS and Community Response

The department is addressing a significant number of EMS calls originating from the Banyan Treatment Center. The EMS Chief is working collaboratively with Banyan, Douglas County, and local officials to ensure appropriate patient intake processes.

The Co-Responder Team (CRT) continues to be a valuable resource, particularly for community members with frequent and repeat contact with emergency services.

Communications and Staffing During High-Risk Periods

The Chief addressed questions regarding firefighter communications, noting that while personnel can communicate effectively, there are opportunities for improvement through the use of mobile data terminals (MDTs) and Bluetooth technology.

Commission Member Knotts asked about staffing during high-risk periods such as fireworks usage around the New Year. Chief Bersagel-Briese reported there were

no major fireworks-related incidents on New Year's Eve. During periods of elevated wildland fire danger, CRFD increases staffing by deploying a brush truck.

[PS 2025-034](#) CRPD November Report

Attachments: [CRPD November Report](#)

Police Department Report

Police Department Report

Recruitment and Staffing Updates

The Police Department is currently conducting a lateral police officer recruitment to fill four to five positions.

Commission Member Morton asked about cost savings associated with lateral hires. Chief Cauley explained that the primary benefit is the ability to deploy experienced officers to the field more quickly. Lateral officers typically complete field training faster than academy graduates, allowing them to serve the community sooner.

In December, CRPD welcomed 12 new employees, including six academy graduates and six lateral hires. Due to the high number of members currently in training, residents may notice patrol vehicles staffed by two officers.

Eight staff members who were promoted in December officially assumed their new roles on January 3.

Community Programs and Engagement

The annual **Heroes and Helpers** event was held at Walmart on December 13. Through donations, the program supported more than 200 children and their families this year.

The department has also found that pickup trucks used by officers have been beneficial for community policing efforts and offer quicker delivery times compared to traditional patrol vehicles.

Crime and Enforcement Updates

A bank robbery suspect, Octavio Rivas Morales, was sentenced to 22 years in prison for the September 2024 armed robbery of a Castle Rock bank.

The Special Response Team (SRT) made several successful organized retail crime arrests during the holiday season.

Commission Chair Hammelman asked about the number of traffic stops versus tickets issued. Chief Cauley explained that not every traffic stop results in a citation, as officers often use stops as educational opportunities rather than enforcement actions.

Commission Member Knotts inquired about the single "robbery" statistic reported in the October monthly report. Chief Cauley clarified that the incident met the statutory definition of robbery under Colorado law but was not an armed robbery.

Animal Control and Reporting

Commission Chair Hammelman asked whether veterinarians are required to report dog-on-dog bites. Chief Cauley explained that veterinarians are only required to report dog bites involving humans.

Officer Wellness and Mental Health Services

Commission Member Van Court asked about mental health services available to police staff. Chief Cauley explained that the department contracts with multiple providers to support employee wellness. Services include mandatory annual mental health check-ins (conducted in person or virtually), critical incident debriefings, and individualized counseling for members requiring additional support

following major incidents.

Traffic and Technology Updates

The department continues to enforce regulations related to electric scooter use and emphasized the importance of parents understanding and educating youth on traffic laws.

Two police drones are currently operational, with plans to add an additional drone in the future.

New Business

N/A

Old Business

N/A

Commissioner Comments and Questions

Adjourn

Mr. Dzuibla made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Van Court seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

The next Public Safety Commission meeting is scheduled for February 5, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.