

**GUNNISON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
July 26, 2022**

The July 26, 2022 meeting was held in the Board of County Commissioners’ meeting room located at 200 E. Virginia Avenue, Gunnison, Colorado. Present, either in person or via Zoom, were:

Jonathan Houck, Chairperson
Roland Mason, Vice-Chairperson
Liz Smith, Commissioner [REMOTE]

Matthew Birnie, County Manager
Melanie Bollig, Deputy County Clerk
Others Present as Listed in Text

GUNNISON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING:

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Houck called the Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners Special Meeting to order at 8:30 am.

RESOLUTION; DECLARING THE CONTINUATION OF AN EMERGENCY IN GUNNISON COUNTY, COLORADO, DUE TO THE SYLVESTER GULCH FIRE (ALSO KNOWN AS THE COAL SEAM FIRE):

Chairperson Houck explained that the special meeting was a follow-up to an emergency declaration for fire issues in Northern Gunnison County, which required the Board to continue that emergency if needed.

Chairperson Houck asked Emergency Management Manager Scott Morrill for the latest status on the Sylvester Gulch Fire. EM Manager Morrill reported that there were no changes in status since the emergency declaration.

Commissioner Mason **moved** to approve Resolution No. 2022-27, Declaring the Continuation of an Emergency in Gunnison County, Colorado, due to the Sylvester Gulch Fire (also known as the Coal Seam Fire). Commissioner Smith seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN: Chairperson Houck adjourned the Gunnison County Board of Commissioners Special Meeting at 8:32 am.

Jonathan Houck, Chairperson

Roland Mason, Vice-Chairperson

Liz Smith, Commissioner

Minutes Prepared By:

Melanie Bollig, Deputy County Clerk

Attest:

Kathy Simillion, County Clerk

GUNNISON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TEXT INCLUSION INTO MINUTES

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF GUNNISON, COLORADO
RESOLUTION NO: 2022-20**

A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE CONTINUATION OF AN EMERGENCY
IN GUNNISON COUNTY, COLORADO, DUE TO THE SYLVESTER GULCH FIRE
(ALSO KNOWN AS THE COAL SEAM FIRE)

WHEREAS, on July 21, 2022, the County Manager, pursuant to Gunnison County Resolution 2020-11 and applicable law, declared an emergency due to the continued hazards surrounding the Sylvester Gulch Fire (previously called the Somerset Coal Seam Fire);

WHEREAS, the Sylvester Gulch Fire continues to burn in steep, rugged terrain, with a multitude of hazards for firefighters on the ground which limits the ability of crews to directly suppress the fire from the ground, resulting in a complex, long-duration wildfire event;

WHEREAS, the Sylvester Gulch Fire continues to potentially impact operations at the West Elk Mine, Hwy 133, and the residents of Somerset;

WHEREAS, the Ragged Mountain Fire Protection District declared the Sylvester Gulch Fire a disaster and delegated the authority of the fire to the Gunnison County Sheriff;

WHEREAS, the magnitude and complexity of the incident and the response needed continues to exceed both the technical and monetary capabilities of the County;

WHEREAS, due at least in part to the foregoing, the Board of County Commissioners has confirmed to a reasonable degree the continued existence of such emergency;

WHEREAS, due at least in part to the foregoing, the public health, safety and welfare of Gunnison County citizens and the public at large in Gunnison County remains in danger;

WHEREAS, due at least in part to the foregoing, persons and/or property are or will be damaged unless continued efforts are undertaken to reduce the threat to life and/or property; and

WHEREAS, there remains an emergency present which necessitates continuation of the use of emergency powers granted by C.R.S. § 24-33.5-709, Local Disaster Emergencies, and Board of County Commissioners, Gunnison County, Colorado, Resolution No. 2020-11.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS DIRECTED:

That it is hereby declared that there continues to be a disaster emergency due to the following conditions:

- a. The complex, hazardous, and long-duration nature of the Sylvester Gulch Fire;
- b. The potential impacts to the West Elk Mine operations, Hwy 133, and the residents of Somerset from the Sylvester Gulch Fire; and
- c. The magnitude and complexity of the response to the Sylvester Gulch Fire has exceeded the technical and monetary capabilities of Gunnison County.

Dated this 26th day of July, 2022.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
GUNNISON COUNTY

Houck – yes, Mason – yes, Smith – yes