

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS, TRUCKEE MEADOWS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

SPECIAL MEETING

TUESDAY

1:30 P. M.

APRIL 11, 2000

PRESENT:

Ted F. Short, Chairman

Jim Shaw, Vice Chairman

Joanne Bond, Commissioner

Jim Galloway, Commissioner

Pete Sferrazza, Commissioner

Amy Harvey, County Clerk

Katy Singlaub, County Manager

Marty Scheuerman, Acting Fire Chief

Madelyn Shipman, Legal Counsel

The Board met in special session in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 E. Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada and conducted the following business:

**AGENDA**

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, on motion by Commissioner Bond, seconded by Commissioner Sferrazza, which motion duly carried, Chairman Short ordered that the agenda for the April 11, 2000 special meeting be approved.

**00-16F UPDATE ON CONSOLIDATION**

Marty Scheuerman, Acting Fire Chief, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD), advised that the Board has been provided with a copy of Reno's Tentative Agreement with Local 731, side letters applicable to the bargaining process, and an outline of the differences at this point. Chairman Short asked if the Board has received copies of all side agreements. Steve Watson, Labor Relations Manager, advised that the City of Reno has indicated that some items related to the ground rules of their bargaining were not provided, and he would be requesting that information in writing.

Chairman Short stated that the issues of concern outlined in the memorandum from Howard Reynolds, Assistant County Manager, dated April 11, 2000 indicates there are some serious problems with the agreement. Commissioner Galloway noted that Mr. Reynolds memorandum states that,

in his opinion, the Successorship language in the proposed labor agreement would effectively preclude true consolidation during the term of the agreement, which is not in keeping with the intent of the County Commissioners, the stated intent of the City of Reno in public meetings, or the clear provision of the contract. He further noted that the TMFPD would be giving up the basic control of their direct operations and would be locked into a 2.1% wage increase every six months for the indefinite future; that some of the things in the agreement definitely look like "cherry picking," which was never the intent; and that he is disappointed in what has been presented and to also find out that there are still side agreements that have not officially been handed over to the County. Commissioner Bond commented that this information looks discouraging on the surface and she has great concerns, but since the County and the Reno City Council have not yet reviewed the documents, she does not want to jump to conclusions.

Upon inquiry of Chairman Short, Chief Scheuerman advised that the Board has been provided with a copy of a letter from Local 731 dated April 10, 2000 stating that they commit to maintain the "status quo" relative to the continued use of volunteers in the unincorporated area of Washoe County.

Commissioner Sferrazza stated that he would like to have staff review the documents and come back to the Board with suggested language changes that would "cure" any perceived defects in the contract.

Discussion was then held concerning problems with the language in the Successorship clause in the contract. Commissioner Sferrazza stated that he believes the County should submit a written response to Reno stating that unless that language is amended, the County cannot go forward with the consolidation agreement. Mr. Reynolds noted that Reno has not been responsive to other formal requests made by the County. Commissioner Sferrazza stated that, before consolidation is rejected, he thinks the Board should vote on what changes are necessary in order to proceed; and that in good faith he believes the County needs to give Reno the opportunity to correct the perceived problems with the contract.

Commissioner Galloway commented that the County was assured that the issues that needed to be changed in order to have an acceptable agreement would be corrected, and even though the County does not have everything yet, it has been found that three areas of those promised corrections were not made. Chairman Short commented that the tentative contract and side agreements are not what was agreed to in the joint session between the County and the City of Reno. Commissioner Bond stated that she thinks the County needs to hear whether or not Local 731 is willing to change language concerning the Successorship clause and she would like to obtain the answer to that question as quickly as possible, noting that this is not the only issue but if they will not relent on this matter they are not likely to relent on the other issues. Commissioner Galloway stated that the Board previously submitted clear information concerning which provisions were felt to be unacceptable and a deadline was set to respond to those issues, which has not been met; that, if the process is repeated, assurances may again be given that they are working those issues out, which could result in other concessions that cost the same; and that if a definitive list of things the County wants corrected is submitted, it should include that no other concessions costing the same amount of money will be accepted. Mr. Reynolds noted that when consolidation was first being discussed, a potential savings of \$1.6-million was identified; and that the collective bargaining agreement identified 24 new positions, which cost will exceed the \$1.6-million savings.

Commissioner Galloway requested that the next agenda item concerning this issue provide the opportunity to review discussions the TMFPD may

have had concerning possible alternatives for consolidation with other agencies. Acting Chief Scheuerman commented that some discussion about consolidation has been held with Sierra Forest Fire District and a meeting with their staff is scheduled for this week; and that available information concerning a potential solution outside of consolidation with the City of Reno could be presented at the next meeting.

Katy Singlaub, County Manager, advised that the decision on ratification of the contract by Local 731 membership is estimated to take place around April 19<sup>th</sup> and that the contract is tentatively proposed to be submitted to the Reno City Council at their meeting of May 2<sup>nd</sup> or May 9<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Galloway suggested that the County request that the Reno City Council look at the contract and make comments on their willingness, desire, and/or ability to have the needed corrections negotiated to make these issues acceptable to the TMFPD; and that this should be done as soon as possible without waiting for ratification of the contract.

Following further discussion, Legal Counsel Shipman stated that certain items have been identified by staff that are either of major concern or need clarification, but a lot of pieces have not actually been put before the Board. She suggested that the Board direct staff to analyze the information and determine the impacts, after which time the Board could provide direction as to how it wants to proceed. County Manager Singlaub stated that staff could conduct the analysis and submit information to the Board on April 25<sup>th</sup>; and that, in the meantime, staff will provide tentative feedback to the City of Reno about some of the initial issues. Commissioner Galloway stated that the submittal should be carefully worded to indicate that this is not a complete list of objections, but the County needs to know if these issues can be corrected.

#### **00-17F UPDATE - FY 2000/2001 DISTRICT BUDGET**

Marty Scheuerman, Acting Fire Chief, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District, advised that a tentative budget has been filed with the State showing the deficit and no tax increase; and that the Board has also been provided with information showing what the budget would look like with no tax increase and no deficit. He then advised that a letter of support for a \$.03 tax increase, which would be needed if the consolidation contract with the City of Reno does not occur within a few weeks, has been received from the Southwest Truckee Meadows Citizen Advisory Board; that he believes there was significant support expressed at the West Truckee Meadows CAB last night; and that the East Washoe CAB, which is down to four members, voted two and two on this issue.

Following further discussion, Board members requested that staff make presentations to other CAB's and Homeowner's Associations regarding the tax increase issue.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Sam Dehne, Reno citizen, stated that the fire merger is a great idea but the Reno City Council cannot be trusted, and the County needs to fully understand this fact and proceed accordingly.

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There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned.

TED F. SHORT, Chairman

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District

ATTEST: AMY HARVEY, County Clerk