

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS, TRUCKEE MEADOWS FIRE  
PROTECTION DISTRICT  
SPECIAL MEETING**

TUESDAY

2:00 P.M.

SEPTEMBER 26, 2000

PRESENT:

**Ted 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, Reno Fire Department**  
**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 September 26, 2000 meeting be approved.

**00-41F      LEASE POLICY – WIRELESS COMMUNICATION FACILITIES  
ON TMFPD PROPERTY**

Marty Scheuerman, Operations Chief, Reno Fire Department, requested this item be deferred and heard in conjunction with the same issue on today's Board of County Commissioners agenda.

On motion by Commissioner Galloway, seconded by Commissioner Sferrazza, Chairman Short ordered that this item be deferred and heard jointly with the Board of County Commissioners agenda item.

Later in the meeting, the Board heard this item as the Board of County Commissioners, the Board of Trustees of the South Truckee Meadows General Improvement District (STMGID), and the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Board of Fire Commissioners.

Howard Reynolds, Assistant County Manager, advised that the County, STMGID, and TMFPD have been approached about placing wireless communication

towers on various properties, and staff is presenting this matter for policy discussion and staff direction. He reviewed the nine placement standards for wireless communication facilities currently allowed by County Ordinance and listed in the Development Code in order of preference. He said the Board might consider limiting placement standards to the first four criteria on the list as the remaining five standards require a special use permit; and that staff does not feel it is appropriate to place communication facilities in County parks or other special use facilities, such as golf courses, etc.

Commissioner Sferrazza referred to statements made in the staff memorandum indicating the most controversial sites for a wireless antenna would be on buildings that have heavy public access because of the controversy surrounding possible health issues. He said, if there is a public safety issue, it should be looked at before policy decisions are made. Mr. Reynolds advised the information concerning public safety issues was presented so the Board would be aware there is a perception by the public of a possible public safety issue, but current scientific literature shows no evidence to support the existence of any health risk. He then noted it would be a violation of the Federal Communication Act to turn down an application for a communication tower based on a perceived public safety issue. In response to further questions raised by Commissioner Sferrazza concerning the public safety issue, Katy Singlaub, County Manager, commented that many people believe there is a health risk with wireless communication facilities, but the World Health Organization has said there is no conclusive evidence of this perception, and staff has pointed out that placing a microwave tower on a building the public visits may invite some public controversy which could be avoided by placing the tower at another location.

Mike Harper, Planning Manager, Department of Community Development, provided additional information and responded to questions of the Board.

The Board members then discussed placement standard preferences. Commissioner Bond stated that she would prefer to avoid the single poles whenever possible and would not want to allow towers on public buildings; and that any other requests could be reviewed by staff for compatibility, aesthetics, etc.

Commissioner Galloway suggested a review committee be established composed of a representative of the County Manager, General Services, and Public Works to determine whether a request is aesthetically and functionally compatible with the proposed site before proceeding further with the process. He then discussed the differences between broadcast and microwave communication towers, commenting that broadcasting would not be desirable because the signals are strong enough to interfere with other signals in the area. He requested that staff research the feasibility of excluding broadcasting antennas.

Commissioner Shaw stated he supports the idea of establishing a review committee, but feels this issue should be handled very cautiously so the door is not opened for people to request antennas everywhere.

Commissioner Sferrazza commented that open space should also be prohibited, and he does not see any reason to build monopoles or lattice towers on County properties for telecommunication facilities. He expressed his continued concern about possible public health safety issues. Commissioner Galloway advised that, if new information comes forth in the future relative to health issues, the Board could reconsider the ordinance. He then said it is appropriate to exclude parks and public special purpose areas.

Legal Counsel Shipman noted that State law requires the County to go out for bid on any leasing of property.

On motion by Commissioner Galloway, seconded by Commissioner Bond, which motion duly carried, Chairman Short ordered that the following placement standards Nos. 1 through 6 currently outlined in the Development Code be approved as the criteria to be considered for the establishment of a wireless communication facility:

- 1) Façade mounted antenna on a building used for industrial or commercial purposes, a building located in a commercial or industrial regulatory zone (General Commercial – GC; Tourist Commercial – TC; Office Commercial – OC; Industrial – I), or on a structure used for utility purposes.
- 2) Rooftop mounted antenna on a building used for industrial or commercial purposes, a building located in a commercial or industrial regulatory zone (General Commercial – GC; Tourist Commercial – TC; Office Commercial – OC; Industrial – I), or on a structure used for utility purposes.
- 3) Specialty pole mounted antenna on a pole used for public, utility or communication, other than wireless communication, purposes.
- 4) Façade mounted antenna on a building used for any other purpose.
- 5) Rooftop mounted antenna on a building used for any other purpose.
- 6) Specialty pole mounted antenna on a pole used for any other purpose.

It was further ordered that designated open space areas and special use facilities be excluded; that TMFPD present the requests to an Ad-Hoc Committee composed of a representative from the Public Works Department, the Manager's Office, and General Services that would screen proposals for functional and aesthetic compatibility; and that, if it is determined the proposal meets the established criteria, staff be directed to present the request to the Board for consideration and further direction relative to the bid process, etc.

It was noted that other interested parties would not be excluded from participating in the committee review process.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Sam Dehne, Reno citizen, discussed his concerns about the Airport Authority and why he was escorted out of one of their recent meetings.

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

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TED SHORT, Chairman  
Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District

ATTEST: AMY HARVEY, County Clerk

  

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