

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
TRUCKEE MEADOWS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

AUGUST 11, 2009

PRESENT:

David Humke, Chairman
Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairperson
Bob Larkin, Commissioner
Kitty Jung, Commissioner
John Breternitz, Commissioner

Nancy Parent, Chief Deputy Clerk
Katy Simon, County Manager
Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel
Curtis Johnson, Division Chief

The Board convened at 12:55 p.m. in regular session in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada, and conducted the following business:

09-40F AGENDA ITEM 2

Agenda Subject: “Public Comment. Comment heard under this item will be limited to two minutes per person and may pertain to matters both on and off the Commission agenda. The District will also hear public comment during individual action items, with comment limited to two minutes per person. Comments are to be made to the District as a whole.”

Nancy Parent, Chief Deputy Clerk, distributed a copy of the minutes from the June 18, 2009 Joint Fire Advisory Board meeting, which were submitted by Cliff Low with some of his notations. The handout was placed on file with the Clerk.

09-41F CONSENT AGENDA – ITEMS 3a AND 3b

Agenda Subject: “Review and acceptance of volunteer/auxiliary report for June 2009 (including monthly operations report of Volunteer Fire Departments indicating response data, training activities/apparatus updates, administrative, radio communication and dispatch issues etc.)”

Agenda Subject: “Approval of May 18, 2009 and June 23, 2009 meeting minutes.”

Commissioner Breternitz noted the items were placed on the agenda with an asterisk, which designated them as non-action items. Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel,

agreed the Board could take no action. Commissioner Breternitz suggested the agenda should be prepared to give the Board the flexibility to take action if it chose to do so.

09-42F AGENDA ITEM 4

Agenda Subject: “Report of the Fire Chief on response to recent Red Rock and Trailer fires.”

Tim Alameda, Interim Fire Chief, provided a copy of the report entitled *Red Rock and Trailer I Narrative*, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He gave a brief overview of events surrounding the Red Rock and Trailer fires, which both started in California. The Trailer fire threatened the Rancho Haven area and was contained at about 1,500 acres. The Red Rock fire originated near Hallelujah Junction and traveled into the Silver Knolls area, extending more than 10,000 acres before it was contained. He acknowledged the assistance of a long list of personnel from career and volunteer agencies, as well as the Washoe County Sheriff’s Office. He thanked Commissioner Weber, Reno’s Interim City Manager Donna Dreska, and Washoe County Fire Services Coordinator Kurt Latipow.

Chief Alameda observed there had been 3,067 calls for service during the month of July, ranging from Washoe Valley to Gerlach. The calls included 17 structure fires, 20 wildland fires and about 2,100 medical emergencies.

Chairman Humke commended staff from the Manager’s Office and Information Technology, who convened conference calls and meetings to update those who were not wearing a uniform. Commissioner Weber thanked everyone for working together.

Commissioner Larkin asked whether the RAVEN aircraft had been used. Chief Alameda replied that it had not. He commented work was still underway on the RAVEN program with Chief Duroseau and Chief Johnson. Commissioner Larkin noted the aircraft had been used on a fire in Warm Springs.

09-43F AGENDA ITEM 5

Agenda Subject: “Presentation regarding City of Reno 2009/2010 budget reductions applicable to the Reno Fire Department.”

Division Chief Curtis Johnson conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He stated the Reno Fire Department had been directed by the City of Reno to reduce its budget by \$7.1 million or about 12 percent. He reviewed the budget reductions and their impacts, which included 26 vacant and frozen positions that accounted for over \$3 million in savings.

Commissioner Larkin observed there were about 20 vacancies anticipated. He asked how many positions were currently vacant and what the normal vacancy rate

had been over the last few years. Chief Johnson did not have exact numbers. He estimated there were currently about 15 vacancies out of approximately 348 authorized positions. Commissioner Larkin wondered how the vacancies would be distributed between the Reno Fire Department and the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD). Chief Johnson stated the vacancies would be spread out over the whole area. He indicated company closures would only happen on the Reno side. Commissioner Larkin questioned what the ripple effect would be if a station was shut down. Chief Johnson explained the budget cuts would result in a maximum depth of resource reduction of three four-person companies out of a total of 23 companies. He pointed out daily staffing required 92 personnel, but there were usually 100 to 103 on each shift to allow for various types of leave.

Chief Johnson described the sequence of “brown out” scenarios that would take place in order to reduce daily overtime expenses when fewer than 92 personnel were available. He explained apparatus would be taken out of operation in the following order: (1) Truck 11 at the Sharlands Station, (2) Truck 15 in Sun Valley, (3) Engine 19 in Somerset would be reduced to a two-person patrol rig, and (4) Engine 4 located at 11th and Ralston would be reduced to a two-person rescue unit. He noted the truck companies used long-ladder trucks that had a different role during a fire than that of an engine company. Trucks and engines were both equipped to handle emergency medical services and were housed together. Instead of closing a station down, protection was still provided to the area by taking a truck company out of service. Any remaining personnel from a four-person crew would be assigned to two- or three-person rescue units. He indicated a rescue unit could not provide fire response, but could supply EMS coverage. He pointed out EMS calls represented 78 percent of all the calls received. Chief Johnson emphasized no TMFPD crews or equipment would be affected, and all TMFPD levels would be maintained according to the Interlocal Agreement. He stated the goal of the brown outs was to reduce daily overtime costs. He acknowledged there were no ideal solutions. He observed fire station closures and lay-offs were being seen across the country.

Commissioner Larkin remarked that the stations were interconnected and there was an indirect impact. He stated any reductions placed a disproportionate amount of stress on other stations. He said the Commissioners wanted to be involved in budget decisions. Although the budget reductions were taken to the Reno City Council, he pointed out they were not provided to the Board of Fire Commissioners. He suggested the Joint Fire Advisory Board (JFAB) was the appropriate place to take budget proposals, although there was no process enumerated in the Interlocal Agreement. He tasked Chief Johnson with bringing forward a discussion of possible procedures at the fall 2009 JFAB meeting. He stated it was JFAB’s role to make recommendations to the Fire Commissioners. He emphasized there could be more budget reductions and a process needed to be in place.

09-44F AGENDA ITEM 6

Agenda Subject: “Update, discussion and possible direction to staff on response times of the Consolidated Fire Department, and presentation on software and data

recording capabilities of Reno Dispatch and Reno Fire Department (requested by Commissioner Jung).”

Acting Division Chief Sandy Munns conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He provided an overview of the workload at the Reno Emergency Communications Dispatch Center. He gave a detailed explanation of the use of two software packages – Tiburon and Execom – that recorded response times and provided statistical information. He also discussed a program called FireRMS that was used to compile National Fire Incident Reporting System data for State and federal agencies. He indicated there were sometimes errors in the on-scene response times that were manually entered by the dispatchers on the Tiburon system. He stated such times were verified in Execom before being corrected in the statistical reports on FireRMS. He noted the times entered in Tiburon and Execom could not be altered. He pointed out there were plans to purchase mobile data terminals that would be installed in the apparatus. He stated the terminals would allow on-scene times to be automatically recorded by the captains at the touch of a keypad, rather than being manually entered by a dispatcher receiving radio calls from the captains.

Division Chief Curtis Johnson provided a copy of a 2006 report on response times for the Reno Fire Department and the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He indicated Chief Munns would be updating the formal report. He observed response times for both agencies had decreased since consolidation.

Commissioner Jung asked what was being done to electronically identify personnel who changed the data. Chief Johnson explained the FireRMS system was supposed to have that capability, but so much data was created when the function was turned on that it crashed the program. He said the data from the mobile computer terminals would provide much more accurate data that would not have to be corrected. Commissioner Jung wondered when the terminals would be in place. Chief Johnson stated there were four units currently in use for beta testing, with plans to purchase them for all the apparatus in the fall of 2009. He expected the purchase would come before the Board and the City Council for approval within the next month or two.

09-45F AGENDA ITEM 7

Agenda Subject: “Commissioners’/Manager’s Announcements, requests for information and identification of topics for future agendas. (No discussion among Commissioners or action will take place on this item.)”

There were no announcements.

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1:39 p.m. On motion by Commissioner Breternitz, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried, the meeting was adjourned.

DAVID E. HUMKE, Chairman
Truckee Meadows Fire
Protection District

ATTEST:

AMY HARVEY, Washoe County Clerk
and Ex-Officio Clerk, Truckee Meadows
Fire Protection District

*Minutes Prepared By:
Lisa McNeill, Deputy County Clerk*