

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

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

OCTOBER 27, 2009

PRESENT:

**David Humke, Chairman**  
**Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairperson**  
**John Breternitz, Commissioner**  
**Bob Larkin, Commissioner**  
**Kitty Jung, Commissioner**  
  
**Amy Harvey, County Clerk**  
**Katy Simon, County Manager**  
**Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel**  
**Curtis Johnson, Division Chief**

The Board convened at 11:01 a.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:

**09-53F      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 a comment limited to two minutes per person. Comments are to be made to the Board of Fire Commissioners as a whole.”

There was no response to the call for public comment.

**09-54F      AGENDA ITEM 3A**

**Agenda Subject:** “Approval of the September 22, 2009 meeting minutes.”

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Breternitz, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried, Chairman Humke ordered that Agenda Item 3A be approved.

**09-55F      AGENDA ITEM 3B**

**Agenda Subject:** “Review and acceptance of volunteer/auxiliary report for August 2009 (Including monthly operations report of Volunteer Fire Departments

**indicating response data, training activities/apparatus updates, administrative, radio communication and dispatch issues etc.)”**

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Breternitz, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried, Chairman Humke ordered that Agenda Item 3B be accepted.

**09-56F      AGENDA ITEM 5**

**Agenda Subject: “Verbal report from the Fire Chief on Certificate of Commendation to off duty firefighter Jesse Washington and Engine 16 Crew for their outstanding customer service related to emergency medical emergency call on September 27, 2009.”**

Acting Fire Chief Tim Alameda explained while off-duty, firefighter Jesse Washington responded to the aid of a citizen with a medical emergency. Division Chief Tamara Lopes read a letter from that citizen, Ursula Loring, who extended her thanks and appreciation.

Chief Alameda presented a “Certificate of Commendation” to firefighter Washington for his outstanding service and a “Certificate of Commendation” to the crew of Engine 16 in appreciation for their outstanding customer service.

There was no action or public comment on this item.

**09-57F      AGENDA ITEM 6**

**Agenda Subject: “Preliminary verbal report from the Fire Chief to the Board of Fire Commissioners regarding October 19, 2009 Joint Fire Advisory Board’s input and recommendations of an evaluation process to determine the effectiveness and measurement of service delivery pursuant to the First Amended Interlocal Agreement for Fire Service and Consolidation.”**

Acting Fire Chief Tim Alameda reported during the Joint Fire Advisory Board (JFAB) meeting several items were discussed including the interlocal agreement. He felt a decision on that agreement should wait until the study from Diamonte Partners LLC for the Comprehensive Master Plan was completed, which would provide the foundation to move forward. Chief Alameda explained the project scope contained the interlocal agreement services between the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) and the City of Reno and remarked that would help with encompassing the master plan.

Chairman Humke commented the Board understood the position of the Chief. He indicated that he had a standing request with the District Attorney’s Office to look for and locate opportunities to declare breach to this contract so that something

could be completed sooner rather than later. On behalf of the Board, he appreciated that under Chief Alameda's command, there was a "breath of fresh air" at reviewing the County's master plan analysis and effort. However, he had some concerns about the contract and believed the Board needed to complete several things simultaneously.

Commissioner Weber indicated she had attended the JFAB meeting and commented that the contract did not allow volunteer firefighters to respond to fires that were in the City of Reno's jurisdiction. She remarked the Reno Councilmembers stated that had never been an issue. Commissioner Weber explained that the volunteers were professionals, which brought much discussion and comments about volunteers not being professional firefighters and said she was offended by those statements and felt some of the volunteers were as well. However, in that same discussion, it was explained that the City of Reno referred to their career firefighters as professionals. Commissioner Weber said issues needed to be discussed concerning the geographical boundaries for volunteers, and that Councilmembers on the JFAB were not aware of such an issue. Commissioner Weber stated the point, whether volunteers responded or not, should not be in the contract. She felt the safety and welfare of all constituents should be included and for the Board to wait for the Diamonte Study to be completed, would be a disservice.

Katy Simon, County Manager, responded based on the labor agreement; volunteers were excluded in the contract from responding to fires in the City of Reno. She said discussions had occurred on how the Board of Fire Commissioners might have a role in labor negotiations. Based on those discussions, a conversation had been initiated with Reno City Manager Donna Dreska. Ms. Simon indicated Ms. Dreska would discuss that with the Reno City Attorney. However, that particular issue would remain in the interlocal agreement and added staff was working on the Board having a role in the discussion of labor strategy. She remarked there was a perception that the Board of County Commissioners participated in labor negotiations for the County. She said she disposed of that notion and explained the Board had never negotiated nor would that be proposed in the future.

Commissioner Larkin agreed a global look of the contract was needed and the appropriate elements of the Diamonte Study would be included. He clarified he was not dissatisfied with the contract, just dissatisfied with some elements of the contract, one being labor negotiations. Commissioner Larkin remarked he did not want to wait for the Diamonte Study to be completed or the process outlined by the Manager on the labor contract negotiations because it needed to be a precondition to the reauthorization.

Chief Alameda commented when the priorities from the City of Reno were brought forward to the Board the issues included were education and wildland interface. He felt the Board's concern was more of a cooperation issue that the Reno City Council needed to have the interlocal agreement contract as a priority, but that was not on the priority list for strategic goals. He did not believe the context was being reviewed when labor negotiations were being discussed; rather in regard to the contract, the City Council and the Board would work together collectively to ensure the interlocal agreement was working for the community. Commissioner Larkin commented this led

back to conversations held in June and July, with the former fire administration, concerning the failure to begin the process of the labor negotiation component and having a representative from the County within that framework. He stated the strategic priorities were correct, but he did not want to wait for the Diamonte Study to be complete in order to begin the process, within the current contract, of having a County representative included in labor negotiations.

Chairman Humke inquired if that was a directive toward a formal contract modification. Commissioner Larkin replied that would be the hope; however, he did not know if that could be completed for a precondition to reauthorization before the next phase. He clarified his requirement for reauthorization was for the County to have representation on the negotiation team.

Commissioner Breternitz asked if the composition for the labor negotiating team was an element of the contract. Chief Alameda replied it was not. Commissioner Breternitz asked if this was an invitation to join the team. Commissioner Larkin replied not a requirement or an invitation, but a basic right that the Board negotiated away five years ago. Commissioner Breternitz inquired if the structure of the negotiating team was not a part of the contract. Commissioner Larkin stated that was correct; however, it could be written into the contract that the County has a representative incorporated into any labor negotiations team that may exist now or in the future. Commissioner Breternitz agreed, but did not think modification to the contract was needed.

Commissioner Weber remarked during the JFAB meeting it was stated that the Reno City Council did not participate in labor negotiations. She explained the member on the negotiating team would not have to be a Commissioner, but a staff member from Washoe County. Chairman Humke commented the important thing was someone representing the County be included.

Chairman Humke asked if it was important to plan for the divorce of the TMFPD from the Reno Fire Department (RFD), and, if so, what would that entail. Kurt Latipow, Fire Services Coordinator, explained that separation would be extremely complicated since the entire command staff and daily operations had been merged into the RFD. However, if direction were given for separation, the rebuilding would take approximately one year. Mr. Latipow explained the TMFPD had no employees because those employees were integrated into the City of Reno. He indicated within the agreement there was a clause for those employees to be offered their positions back with the TMFPD, with stipulations. He said it could also be concluded that several of the TMFPD stations would have to be relocated at a substantial cost. Mr. Latipow said it would be a rebuilding of the entire operation and the placement of stations would not be advantageous to a stand alone fire district. He said with the budget process and the formula that was in place, there was the stability that the TMFPD had achieved over the years that benefited the District in the event of additional annexations. Mr. Latipow confirmed it could be done, but would be a very expensive endeavor to create a new stand alone agency.

Chairman Humke commented for the benefit of the public, the timing to end the contract would be approximately 20 months. Mr. Latipow remarked, contractually, the City of Reno must be notified no later than June 30, 2010 if the County chose to not exercise the automatic renewal. He explained if the Board chose not to exercise that renewal, the County would have one year to start the withdrawal process and create the management model. He added he did not see anything that prohibited the TMFPD Board of Fire Commissioners from requesting initiation of negotiations on a successor agreement. Mr. Latipow stated the interlocal agreement spoke to the automatic renewal and notification if the County chose to withdraw, but it did not address negotiations of changes to the agreement other than the item that said changes could be made. Should the Board direct staff to agendize discussion and possible direction on entering into negotiations, he hoped that some recommendations could be brought forth from the Master Plan. Mr. Latipow explained there had been some contract changes proposed to address a few of the voiced concerns. He indicated if both parties agreed current changes could be done within the existing interlocal agreement.

Chief Alameda announced the fire department ran over 3,000 calls of service and attended over 80 fires in September. He indicated this was a fire department with excellent personnel that ran from Washoe Valley to Cold Springs. Chief Alameda indicated when departments were changed and uprooted in 2000 that was also a transition for City of Reno personnel to build a new organization, which was not easy, and at the same time there was an incredible call volume and work load. Chief Alameda remarked this operation ran as a team and emphasized the firefighters were excellent and dedicated personnel. He believed that point was missed at times.

Chairman Humke said he understood the team concept and believed in that strongly; however, this team of elected officials did not have a say in major components of the contract.

Commissioner Breternitz indicated he was supportive of having a seat on the negotiations team since it was important to initiate some negotiations. Commissioner Weber felt seceding from the agreement would be a "last ditch" effort and the Board should do whatever was needed to make improvements. She stated the TMFPD and the City of Reno were doing a fabulous job and commended the firefighters. She confirmed this was not about them, it was about issues with the contract. She hoped the Chairman's points would be well taken because the County did need a seat at the table for negotiations. Commissioner Weber hoped that sentiment would be brought to the JFAB and the City of Reno.

Commissioner Larkin inquired on the next step. Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel, replied if the Fire Commissioners wished to review areas of the agreement for amendment to the current form or a new agreement, the best way would be to schedule a specific item on an agenda as the TMFPD Fire Commissioners so those discussions could be taken back to the JFAB and the City of Reno.

Chairman Humke suggested a standing item on the TMFPD agenda to discuss the desired changes or concerns. Commissioner Larkin reminded the Board that the JFAB only met quarterly.

Division Chief, Curtis Johnson, said Councilmember Aiazzi requested from the Fire Commissioners any items that were being considered for changes so it could be placed on a JFAB agenda. Commissioner Larkin requested an item for a representative of the County to be on the labor negotiations team and for that request to be agendized on the next Fire Commissioner meeting for discussion and direction to the JFAB. Chairman Humke also requested an audit concerning response to fires under the Mutual Aid agreement.

There was no action or public comment on this item.

**09-58F      AGENDA ITEM 6**

**Agenda Subject: “Commissioners’/Managers Announcements, Requests for Information, Topics for Future Agendas and Statements Relating to Items Not on the Agenda. (No discussion among Commissioners will take place on this item.)”**

Commissioner Larkin requested an item for a representative of the County to be on the labor negotiations team

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**ADJOURNMENT**

**11:52 a.m.** There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion by Commissioner Breternitz, seconded by Commissioner Weber, which motion duly carried, Chairman Humke ordered that the meeting be adjourned.

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**DAVID HUMKE**, Chairman  
Truckee Meadows Fire  
Protection District

**ATTEST:**

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

*Minutes Prepared by:  
Stacy Gonzales  
Deputy County Clerk*