

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

TUESDAY

10:00 a.m.

FEBRUARY 22, 2011

PRESENT:

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

Amy Harvey, County Clerk
Katy Simon, County Manager
Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel
Kurt Latipow, Fire Service Coordinator
Michael Hernandez, Fire Chief

The Board convened at 11:41 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:

11-07F 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.”

Robert Parker commented on the contrast between the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) and the Sierra Fire Protection District (SFPD) meetings. He remarked that the TMFPD was created 10 years ago with an impressive amount of money; however, within that 10 years service had not improved. Mr. Parker stated there were still six stations and, even though 80 percent of the calls were medical, there were no paramedics. He noted that most of the tax paying citizens in the District lived outside the effective range of the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA). Mr. Parker said it was time the Fire Board focused on services to the taxpayers and requested that the TMFPD be audited by an independent auditor.

11-08F AGENDA ITEM 3A

Agenda Subject: “Acceptance of volunteer/auxiliary report for October, November and December 2010 (Including monthly operations report of Volunteer Fire Departments indicating response data, training activities/apparatus updates, administrative, radio communication and dispatch issues etc.)”

Commissioner Weber inquired about the Volunteer Departments that did not submit volunteer/auxiliary reports and asked how that function could be improved.

Kurt Latipow, Fire Services Coordinator, replied that staff worked closely with the Volunteer Association to gather those reports. He commented that two Auxiliary Departments were currently rebuilding. He said a station manager was recently recruited for the Hidden Valley Auxiliary Program and a person was being interviewed for the Palomino Volunteer Station and hoped to have those two Auxiliary Programs running by the summer. He said he would encourage the Volunteer Departments to respond and would contact the Volunteer Chiefs to make this a priority.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Humke, seconded by Commissioner Larkin, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 3A be accepted.

11-09F AGENDA ITEM 3B

Agenda Subject: “Approval of the BOFC meeting minutes for January 25, 2011.”

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Humke, seconded by Commissioner Larkin, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 3B be accepted.

11-10F AGENDA ITEM 4

Agenda Subject: “Fire Chiefs Report – Report and discussion related to Fire District operations by Reno/Truckee Meadows Chief Michael Hernandez.”

Reno/Truckee Meadows Chief Michael Hernandez introduced Battalion Chief Tim O’Brien as the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) liaison and Division Chief Brent Swearingen who would be in charge of Administration and Operations. Chief Hernandez also introduced Ken DeBerg, Logistics Officer, and explained Mr. DeBerg retained the records for assets and equipment.

Chief Hernandez reviewed the incident response and Fire Station brown out statistics. In response to a previous request from Commissioner Jung to establish a trending analysis, he noted that response was not included in the report, but would be completed toward the end of March. Chief Hernandez indicated a process would be established to include that data in future monthly reports.

Chief Hernandez reviewed the significant events that occurred during the month of January and noted there were 36 structure fires, nine being significant structural fires. He said the City of Reno had requested all departments take a budget reduction in

order to meet the shortfall for the current budget year. Chief Hernandez stated that the Reno Fire Department/TMFPD was requested to reduce their budget by \$1.7 million, which had been a difficult task. He indicated that services and supplies had been reduced along with a reduction in force of approximately 36 employees. The reduction in force meant that 12 people per shift were no longer reporting. In developing a path forward, the goal was to keep as many stations open as possible without impacting service delivery to the TMFPD or the core of the District, which was inside the McCarran loop. He said Station 19 in Somersett had been added to the brown out list resulting in an additional two to four minutes response for service into that area from the MaeAnne Station. He said multi-company stations were also reviewed inside the McCarran loop and would be reduced to one Rig per station. Depending on staffing, Station 21 located in the Grand Sierra Hotel and Casino parking lot would be browned out. Chief Hernandez stated that service delivery had to be reinvented and the existing staffing and brown out plans were a work in progress. He noted that the Board would be kept aware of the process and would receive updates in a timely manner.

Commissioner Jung reiterated that the requested trending analysis was for a statistical designation of the fact, or lack thereof, for any influences caused by brown outs. She indicated the data needed to be historical in order to answer any questions regarding impacts. Since there was misinformation in the public, she preferred that information quickly. Commissioner Jung questioned why some significant events included addresses and others did not. Chief Hernandez explained that was an oversight and normally a generic block number was included. Commissioner Jung felt it was important to include addresses and requested those be added in the future. She also requested, in terms of sick leave and overtime, an operational audit on employees within the District and an accounting of equipment in order to answer questions from constituents. Chief Hernandez stated some reports including sick leave and overtime had been initiated for the City of Reno, but he would now include capital equipment. Commissioner Jung said she would prefer to have liaison activity between the City of Reno and the District to know what the City was requesting from the Chief.

Commissioner Larkin asked if all TMFPD Stations were currently fully operational. Chief Hernandez stated that was correct. Commissioner Larkin asked if there were any anticipations of reducing staff in the District counter to the current agreement. Chief Hernandez stated that was not anticipated.

Commissioner Humke asked if station brown outs were an element of negotiation with labor organizations. Chief Hernandez replied those were not. He said the Reno City Council provided a budget and directed the Chief how best to implement that budget. He then evaluated service delivery versus obligations to the labor contracts, the interlocal agreement and service globally to the system and would then make recommendations. Chief Hernandez stated he adhered to the terms of the labor contract. Commissioner Humke asked if there was a preview of the District's budget, such as three-person manning of stations. Chief Hernandez said some preliminary broad discussions on that topic had taken place, but noted it was intended to adhere to the interlocal contract, which specifically addressed not reducing crew size or service to the

areas. Commissioner Humke asked if the Chief would seek to match the two Fire Service agencies. Chief Hernandez replied there could be some modification or a mixed staffing plan where some stations were staffed with a four-person crew and others staffed with a three-person crew. He suggested discussions regarding the best way to adopt a modified staffing plan that would be cost effective and provide the best service delivery.

Commissioner Weber inquired about staffing when a brown out was involved. For example, Chief Hernandez explained Station 19 had a rescue unit that contained two medics. That Station received less than 100 calls per year and, with other nearby stations and given the call volume, he felt adequately filled the needs for that area. Commissioner Weber asked if Station 19 served only the Somerset area. Chief Hernandez indicated that Station primarily served the Somerset area, but could also serve parts of Verdi and the upper MaeAnne area. Commissioner Weber commented that she was concerned about that whole area and the response time. Chief Hernandez emphasized he was concerned for all the stations that were impacted.

In response to the call for public comment, Cliff Low commented on the Chief's report and the brown out statistics.

There was no action on this item.

11-11F AGENDA ITEM 5

Agenda Subject: "Approval to purchase 150 Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Bottles for TMFPD from Municipal Emergency Services in the amount of \$118,800 at \$792 each to replace existing bottles that are set to expire in 2011."

Reno/Truckee Meadows Chief Michael Hernandez explained the Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) was used to protect firefighters from smoke and toxic fumes. Per Department of Transportation (DOT) requirement, the SCBA bottles had a useful life of 15 years from the date of manufacture. He said the District's SCBA bottles had reached their useful life since they were manufactured and purchased in 1996.

Chairman Breternitz asked if the SCBA bottles purchased for the District were used by the District. Ken DeBerg, Logistics Officer, stated that was correct. He clarified that SCBA bottles had a 15 year expiration life, which was a standard set by DOT. He said these SCBA bottles would replace the older SCBA bottles and would be used on District-owned equipment.

Commissioner Humke inquired on the disposal of the old SCBA bottles and if there was any resale value. Mr. DeBerg replied there were no buy-back options and because this was a DOT standard, through the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the SCBA bottles were destroyed at the end of the 15 years. Commissioner Humke felt the expiration dates were advisory.

Commissioner Weber asked if all 150 SCBA bottles were needed. Mr. DeBerg indicated more were needed. He said this purchase along with several SCBA bottles purchased last year would bring the total to 225, six less of what was needed.

In response to the call for public comment, Bob Ackerman inquired about a previous grant to buy Scott Air Packs.

In response to Commissioner Humke, Mr. DeBerg clarified there was assistance from a firefighter grant to the Volunteer Fire Departments. He noted that Scott Air Packs were purchased for the volunteers. He specified that the 15 year federal requirement lifespan was for the SCBA bottles and not the frames.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Larkin, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5 be approved.

11-12F AGENDA ITEM 6

Agenda Subject: “Discussion and possible direction regarding approval to solicit bids for the purchase of two (2) new Structural Fire Apparatus for replacement of Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District’s Engines 13 and 18.”

Reno/Truckee Meadows Chief Michael Hernandez explained this was to solicit bids for the purchase of two Structural Fire Apparatus for replacement of the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Engines 13 and 18, both of which were included in the approved 2010/11 budget. He said once the bids were received, staff would return to the Board and seek guidance and/or approval. Chief Hernandez explained an apparatus typically lasted 20 years. He stressed this was for bids only and noted that the bids took about 30 to 60 days and then, if moving forward, the actual fabrication of a fire truck took between 12 and 14 months.

Per the current revenue situation, Chairman Breternitz asked if consideration was given to this recommendation and, if there was an efficient way to work on maintenance of the existing trucks. Chief Hernandez said consideration was given to the current situation. He said this was a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that was initiated with available funds. Chairman Breternitz recognized that CIP funds were established for capital equipment, but still subject to the Board’s discretion. Chief Hernandez said if these were not purchased, the District would need to institute a robust maintenance program, but he was concerned at the price of the parts for these vehicles, which due to their age could experience critical mechanical failures. Chairman Breternitz asked if there was thought given to purchasing replacement parts and covering all the options. Chief Hernandez indicated that the new vehicles came with a warranty, and he was looking globally and long-term. If so directed, he would generate supplemental data for the Board.

Commissioner Humke asked if the number of pieces of equipment were part of negotiations with labor associations. Chief Hernandez indicated this was not

subject to labor negotiations. He said a working group would compile the specifications and ask the crew who used the trucks what was deemed appropriate. Then he would review the bid to identify the correct specifications needed. Commissioner Humke asked if hours of operation for the vehicles were reviewed. Chief Hernandez replied mileage, cost to maintain the vehicle and pump tests were required, and pumping capacity, general usage of the vehicle and all factors were weighed. Commissioner Humke asked if an analysis was conducted of miles driven and the types of miles driven. Chief Hernandez said an analysis of emergency response versus non-emergency response was not conducted and did not believe the data gathering system was capable of collecting that type of data. He said the crews were strongly encouraged to interact with schools and citizens in venues throughout the community and it was his goal to have a high profile organization. Commissioner Humke stated he would not vote in favor of this motion and felt there were efficiencies that could be achieved.

Commissioner Weber asked if the two new engines would remain in the designated stations. Chief Hernandez stated that was correct. Commissioner Weber believed this was the time to receive the bids and then make the determination on whether or not to move forward.

Commissioner Larkin stated since the funds had been saved to buy capital equipment, these CIP funds must be spent within the TMFPD for capital equipment. He found it dangerous that a lay Board would second guess a Fire Chief and noted this bid had been delayed twice.

In response to the call for public comment, Cliff Low questioned if this was the time to spend \$1.2 million or the time to set aside those funds. He also inquired if equipment was sitting in browned out stations and not being used.

Commissioner Larkin moved to proceed with the bids as requested. Commissioner Weber seconded the motion.

Chairman Breternitz supported seeking the bids, but requested the motion include investigation for viable alternatives to the expenditure of the funds.

Commissioner Larkin amended the motion to require Chief Hernandez to adhere to the guideline that the Chair had placed in terms of seeking all reasonable alternatives and options and then bring forth a full analysis. The seconder agreed.

Although agreeing with the amendment, Commissioner Humke stated he would not support the motion and felt an allocation of resources needed to be reviewed.

On call for the question, the motion passed 4 to 1 with Commissioner Humke voting “no.”

11-13F AGENDA ITEM 7

Agenda Subject: “Acknowledge receipt of Memo Concerning Internal Controls over Capital Assets at Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District, and Provide Direction to Staff.”

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Weber, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 7 be acknowledged.

11-14F AGENDA ITEM 8

Agenda Subject: “Update on Joint Fire Advisory Board Meeting and Interlocal Agreement review process.”

Kurt Latipow, Fire Services Coordinator, indicated there had not been a Joint Fire Advisory Board (JFAB) meeting.

In response to the call for public comment, Cliff Low commented on the Interlocal Agreement, the Master Plan and response times.

There was no action taken on this item.

11-15F AGENDA ITEM 9

Agenda Subject: “Update and discussion on the progress of the Reno Fire Department Standard of Cover and Regional Standard of Cover.”

Kurt Latipow, Fire Services Coordinator, said during the next Joint Fire Advisory Board (JFAB) meeting the Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) consultant would present the reviewed Reno Standard of Cover. He said during the March 8, 2011 Board of Fire Commissioners meeting, the ESCI consultant would assist in presenting information and findings on the analysis being completed for the Regional Standard of Cover. Mr. Latipow explained the Regional Standard of Cover may recommend placement of future stations and consideration of opportunities for economy of scale as to moving stations around, but would not make a recommendation as to how many people should be on every engine. He said also recommended could be consideration as to how many fire personnel it would take to establish an effective response force.

In response to the call for public comment, Cliff Low addressed the Board concerning an independent opinion regarding the Master Plan.

There was no action taken on this item.

11-16F AGENDA ITEM 10

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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ADJOURNMENT

12:54 p.m. There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried, the meeting was adjourned.

JOHN BRETERNITZ, Chairman
Truckee Meadows Fire
Protection District

ATTEST:

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

*Minutes Prepared By:
Stacy Gonzales, Deputy County Clerk*