

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

TUESDAY

10:00 a.m.

MARCH 8, 2011

PRESENT:

John Breternitz, Chairman
Bob Larkin, Commissioner
Kitty Jung, Commissioner
David Humke, Commissioner

Amy Harvey, County Clerk
Katy Simon, County Manager
Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel
Kurt Latipow, Fire Services Coordinator

ABSENT:

Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairperson

The Board convened at 4:06 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:

11-17F 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.”

There was no response to the call for public comment.

11-18F AGENDA ITEM 3

Agenda Subject: “Acceptance of volunteer/auxiliary report for January 2011 (Including monthly operations report of Volunteer Fire Departments indication 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 Jung, seconded by Commissioner Humke, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Weber absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 3 be accepted.

11-19F AGENDA ITEM 4

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

Kurt Latipow, Fire Services Coordinator, stated that the Fire Chief report would be distributed to the Board on March 9, 2011.

The following item only (Agenda Item No. 5) will be heard by the Washoe County Board of Commissioners who will convene as the Board of Fire Commissioners for the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District, the Board of Fire Commissioners for the Sierra Fire Protection District and the Washoe County Board of Commissioners.

11-20F AGENDA ITEM 5

Agenda Subject: “Discussion of Regional Standards of Cover (SOC) process and update of emergency response policies in order to complete the Regional SOC, considering such SOC matters as current emergency response data, current Washoe County Land Use Master Plan service area boundaries (suburban, rural residential, rural) and possible service delivery objectives, among others.”

Based on previous direction, Kurt Latipow, Fire Services Coordinator, stated he had worked with a consultant to conduct a Regional Standard of Cover (SOC) study. That study was deemed incomplete as it lacked response time data from the Reno Fire Department. The Reno Fire Department has since agreed to participate with the new consultant to complete the study. He said during the May 11, 2010 Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) meeting action was taken to approve an extension of the First Amended Interlocal Agreement for Fire Service and Consolidation. Contained within the extension was a requirement that the City of Reno obtain and pay for a consultant to complete a SOC study and a requirement for the District, after receiving the SOC study, to obtain and pay for a Regional SOC plan.

Mr. Latipow said staff from the City of Reno and the County had worked to develop a scope of work that would govern the development of the Reno SOC development and subsequently the development of the Regional SOC. The scope of work was distributed to consultants and Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) was awarded the contract. Over the past few months, the consultant had gathered information and prepared the Reno SOC, which had been reviewed and went before the Joint Fire Advisory Board (JFAB) on March 7, 2011. Mr. Latipow said the consultant had reviewed the previously prepared TMFPD, Sierra Fire Protection District (SFPD) and the County Fire Suppression Program’s SOC reports which were developed by Diamante LLC. As part of the review process, the consultant had been working with staff to update response data and related maps, which had been used to prepare the initial funding and recommendations. He said the Diamante Report omitted several critical questions which included:

- What is the current level of response performance as measured by first-due and full effective response force response times by region;
- What was the expected level of service, based on first-due unit response times and full effective response force response times by region; and,
- Based on the first two questions, what new or relocated fire service resources would be needed to meet expected levels of service.

Mr. Latipow stated in order for the consultant to move forward and complete the Regional SOC, direction was needed from the Board related to the emergency response policy.

Joe Parrot, ESCI consultant, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. The presentation highlighted the preliminary analysis and recommendations for the Regional SOC. He offered the following recommendations:

- ✓ **Performance Zone Recommendation** – The County Master Plan had two similar, but different response time standards. In one, Rural was a single category, and in the other, Rural was divided between Rural Residential and Rural. He said three response time performances were recommended: Suburban; Rural; and, Frontier. He said “Urban Residential”, “Commercial”, and “Industrial” were identified Master Plan categories; however, existed in disaggregated pockets. Mr. Parrot said those areas should be treated as “target hazard” areas by the individual fire agencies and response protocols developed according to risk within each area.
- ✓ **Response Time Performance Standard** - Mr. Parrot explained the following response times standard was recommended: ***Suburban*** – The first response unit capable of initiating effective incident mitigation should arrive within 10 minutes, 85 percent of the time from the receipt of the call; ***Rural*** – The first response unit capable of initiating effective incident mitigation should arrive within 20 minutes, 85 percent of the time from the receipt of call; and, ***Frontier*** – The first unit capable of initiating effective incident mitigation should arrive as soon as practical based on the best effort of response forces. Over time it was recommended that the Suburban response time standard be reduced to first unit arrival within eight minutes, 85 percent of the time. He said improving dispatch call processing time and turnout time would contribute to achieving this standard.
- ✓ **Full Effective Response Force Performance Standard** – Mr. Parrot explained the following response times standard was recommended: ***Suburban*** – The full effective response force to a moderate risk incident should arrive within 15 minutes, 85 percent of the time from the receipt of call; ***Rural*** – The full effective response force to a moderate risk incident should arrive within 25 minutes, 85 percent of the time from the receipt of call; and ***Frontier*** – The full effective response force to a moderate risk incident should arrive as soon as practical based on the best effort of response forces.

Commissioner Humke questioned the disparity between the 25 second difference in response time regarding the City of Reno and asked why that occurred. Mr. Parrot stated he was not sure why that happened and had provided that data back to the Dispatch Center for further review. He said an issue was identified in the provided data and, when that data was returned in the corrected form and reanalyzed it may change the outcome. Commissioner Humke inquired on the number of calls analyzed. Mr. Parrot indicated he analyzed approximately 16,000 calls in the City of Reno and about 5,000 calls in the County. Commissioner Humke asked if the City of Reno was the center of the map used for the analysis. Mr. Parrot explained the City of Reno project was an independent project. He said the time standards proposed were those already adopted in the Master Plan that included start and end times. He said once the two Fire Districts and the County Fire Suppression areas had defined their response time expectations, then a regional system would move forward that met the City's citizen expectations and what the County defined. Commissioner Humke asked if a SOC analysis helped policy makers in land-use decisions. Mr. Parrot said that was correct and strongly recommended the SOC be used for such matters regarding the impact to fire services on any future land-use decisions.

Chairman Breternitz felt the Master Plan was not intended to be a document full of fire expertise and hoped that Mr. Parrot would use his expertise in fire services versus the area of reading through the Master Plan and finding the figures for a 10 minute or 20-minute response time. He said there were elements in the Master Plan that could be changed if they were out of line with the recommendations. Chairman Breternitz asked if there were other sources for the recommendations. Mr. Parrot replied he was seeking either a confirmation or a modification for what currently existed. He said with 10 and 20 minute response times being the present standard, the measurement of the current regional performance was needed; however, there would be an expense involved. As policy makers the Board could modify those standards, but if those become more stringent there would be a cost of approximately \$4 million per fire station to construct and equip and about \$1.5 million to operate each station.

Based on the economy, Chairman Breternitz questioned if the times and the distribution of stations, equipment and personnel were reasonable even if some of those standards were not met everywhere. Mr. Parrot indicated from initiation of a call to arrival time needed to be in the five to seven minute range, which particularly in the rural areas was unlikely. He added to provide the shortened response times would require the entire County budget, which was not affordable. The question was what level of service the community was willing to pay for. Chairman Breternitz asked if there was a way the Board could express a philosophy of upgrading the standards either by reviewing them periodically or the times be reduced as much as possible and set that as a goal. Mr. Parrot said that language could be included within the SOC, which would be the guiding principles for moving forward with the deployment of resources.

Commissioner Jung stated that Mr. Parrot had driven through various communities within the County and asked him to identify which communities he visited. Mr. Parrot stated he would continue to work with the Community Development

Department to refine that list, but identified Arrowcreek, Belli Ranch, East Washoe Valley, Government Home Sites, Juniper Hills, Mt. Rose Fan Highway, Old Southwest Truckee Meadows, Pleasant Valley, Spanish Springs, Wadsworth, Warm Springs, Callahan Ranch, Thunder Canyon Golf Course and St. James Village. Commissioner Jung was grateful this was a work in progress and that Mr. Parrot was responsive to what was discussed during the JFAB meeting.

Commissioner Jung indicated during the JFAB meeting the Reno SOC was reviewed. She said some of the issues agreed on were that Dispatch needed to improve who first received the information. She said they discussed remedies for those issues so long-term errors could be corrected. They also discussed cancelling of calls, cost for running an engine and a “commonality of terms” but was unclear on how that would be accomplished as a policy. The consultant agreed to complete some plotting of mileage around existing stations to reflect response times in terms of mileage, and to review the fines and fees for false fire alarms within the City of Reno.

Commissioner Larkin added that JFAB was in possession of the Reno SOC, which was a requirement for the continuation of the Interlocal Agreement. He said the Reno City Council had agendized a similar discussion on response times and the definition of response zones. He stated the requirement that the Fire Board placed for continuing the dialogue was met and felt confident the Reno City Council would have a similar discussion. Mr. Latipow clarified that the 10 minute proposed response time included when the call was received from the 9-1-1 system; however, the City of Reno began their time from the time of dispatch. He clarified there would be a full review of those times.

Mr. Latipow said a recommendation by JFAB was for the Board to consider the proposed recommendations for adoption.

Chairman Breternitz asked if there was a benefit, via the JFAB, in establishing a common time and why those did not correlate. For the purpose of definitions, Mr. Latipow believed there was a benefit to common terminology; however, as presented to the JFAB, if the example were set to exact the same times in the District as the City, the District did not have the infrastructure to match those times.

In response to the call for public comment, the following individuals voiced their concerns, comments and suggestions: Ginger Pierce, Rod Smith, Gary Pestello, Garth Elliott, Penny Beck, Tabitha Vetter, Tom Trelease, Bob Ackerman, Steven Perez, Kim Toulouse, Robert Parker, Shyrl Bailey, William Steward, Cliff Low, Jane Countryman, Donna Perez, Thomas Daly, Darryl Cleveland, Laura Mijanovich, Alex Kukulus, Charles Lanzi, Scott Campos and Sally Whitegurd.

Amy Harvey, County Clerk, stated there were three e-mails to be read into the record from George Thomas, Margie Freeman and Betty Kelly. Chairman Breternitz acknowledged the e-mails and directed them placed on file with the Clerk.

Mr. Latipow said the presented SOC was a preliminary assessment and a request for further Board direction. The consultant would then apply the criteria and policy direction and complete an analysis of the system to include the plotting of all the stations to determine where the gaps were based on the policy decision. He stated the report would be redrafted to include policy decisions and recommendations as to the current system and where additional improvements may need to be considered. Mr. Latipow stated the revised draft was scheduled to return to the JFAB on April 11, 2011. He said once that draft was presented, the JFAB recommendations would be brought forward to the Commission to seek review and direction relative to the draft.

Commissioner Larkin stated the consultant sought specific direction to begin the process. He asked if there was a range, or what would be the merit for Rural if a 10 or 20 minute response time was reviewed and if that were possible within the contract. Mr. Latipow replied there had been preliminary discussions should the Board choose to direct one, two or three thresholds to be modeled. Commissioner Larkin said he was concerned if the April date could be met since that April 11, 2011 date was critical to the JFAB in order to return recommendations to this Board. He felt refinement was needed and should be continued because to not move forward at this time would be a disservice.

Chairman Breternitz said the SOC was only an element in a very complex challenge, which was providing the best fire service to the citizens. He was concerned that the Board would not be allowed to review the entire range of possible solutions. Chairman Breternitz asked if the report would result in recommendations that covered the comprehensive look at the situation the community was faced with in terms of fire districts, SOC, and response times versus a more limited and narrow scope. Mr. Parrot said the current Scope of Work was a deployment system to meet and identify performance standards. He said it may be worthwhile to make an adjustment in that scope and review what it would take to deliver a 10 minute Suburban response time, a 15 minute Rural response time and a 10 minute Countywide response time.

Commissioner Jung agreed and, in addition, suggested the consultant integrate the bordering counties and map those close to Washoe County to see where the Mutual Aid Agreements would be beneficial. Mr. Parrot said that would be completed.

Mr. Latipow clarified a strategic planning priority requested by the Board was a master plan for fire service. He reviewed the process that had been completed and said the Master Plan contained several components. He said within the Master Plan there was a comment by the consultant on the frustration of having data produced; therefore, some of the recommendations were broad-based, but some recommendations were specific and those were being implemented. He said the Diamante Study also mentioned the land-use element and recommended the Board set performance criteria. He explained the gaps in the Diamante Study were tied to the lack of performance criteria that was formally adopted.

On motion by Commissioner Larkin, seconded by Commissioner Humke, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Weber absent, it was ordered that the following definitions be accepted:

- **Suburban** - Territory identified as the Master Plan category “Suburban Residential,” and those areas that have been developed with lots comparable to those allowed by the Suburban Residential categories;
- **Rural** – Territory identified as the Master Plan category “Rural Residential.” In addition, territory identified as the Master Plan category as “Rural” except as identified as “Frontier”;
- **Frontier** - Territory identified as the Master Plan category “Open Space.” In addition, territory north of the line commonly known as Township 22 unless designated as “Rural Residential” or “Suburban Residential.”

It was further ordered that Urban Residential, Commercial and Industrial be identified as Master Plan categories; however, they exist in the aggregated pockets and those areas should be treated as target hazard areas by the individual fire agencies and response protocols according to the risk within each area.

Commissioner Larkin moved that on the first due performance standard, staff be directed to develop the bands that were discussed and that the “as practical” be accepted for Frontier property. Commissioner Humke seconded the motion.

Commissioner Larkin explained that five to 10 minute response times would be established for Suburban as a band and 10 to 20 minute response times on the Rural.

Commissioner Jung asked if that could be altered to expand to eight minutes; what it would mean if everyone had an eight minute response, and if there was a cost to bear. Commissioner Larkin clarified it was five minutes to give staff a band, but agreed the whole array was needed.

Mr. Latipow said discussed previously was to use the time a person placed a call, to the time the fire service arrived on scene, which was the full spectrum being proposed to measure and proposed to be measured at 10 minutes. Then the consultant would offer 10 minutes in those areas designated Suburban and to show what it would look like at a 10 minute response time Countywide. He said Rural would be measured at 15 and 20 minute response times. Commissioner Larkin stated the five to eight minute parameter was being added along with the cost.

On call for the question, the motion passed on a 4 to 0 vote with Commissioner Weber absent.

Commissioner Larkin requested that TMFPD Chief Hernandez transmit the actions taken by the Board to the Reno City Council.

The following item only (Agenda Item No. 6) will be heard by the Washoe County Commissioners who will convene as the Board of Fire Commissioners for the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District and the Board of Fire Commissioners for the Sierra Fire Protection District.

11-21F AGENDA ITEM 6

Agenda Subject: “Presentation and discussion of the fiscal and operational impact to the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District of the October 13, 2010 Sierra Fire protection District Arrowcreek staffing report and consideration of direction to staff.”

Kurt Latipow, Fire Services Coordinator, said he had been tasked to work with the County financial consultant on an analysis of the operational, financial and legal impacts of the Arrowcreek staffing options as presented in the October 26, 2010 staff report from the Sierra Fire Protection District (SFPD). Mr. Latipow said the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) did not have funding to offset additional costs of another district. He said Option No. 1, the relocation of the Bowers Station staff to Joy Lake and Galena staff to Arrowcreek, would need to be reset. Mr. Latipow indicated that analysis had been based on land use planning. He commented that the TMFPD could serve those areas of the Truckee Meadows within Washoe Valley in 20 minutes or less, which was consistent with the land use plan. However, based on the current work with the Regional Standard of Cover, that was now a flawed analysis. He said consistent with the new definition, it appeared that the TMFPD could not serve their entire district in Washoe Valley. In addition, Mr. Latipow said some options did would a potential impact to the current interlocal agreement and those would need to be renegotiated.

Mr. Latipow presented the following recommendations for consideration:

- Staff to be directed to determine the regional benefit and cost of relocating TMFPD Station 16, currently on East Lake Boulevard; however, now that the threshold had been measured, moving that Station one to two miles would not allow the District to serve the pocket of Suburban in the time presented;
- Staff be directed to work with all fire agencies in the County to conduct an analysis of response zones for the purpose of determining if sending the closest resources first, regardless of the agency, would enhance service delivery and eliminate sending additional pieces of apparatus dependant on the type of call, and return with the results and related recommendations;
- In consideration of some concerns relative to EMS, staff be directed to work with the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA) to consider basing an ambulance within Washoe Valley either permanently or during projected peak call demand times; and,
- Staff be directed to initiate an analysis of options related to a regional approach for the delivery of fire based services.

Chairman Breternitz said the range of options did not include scenarios regarding a combination of the fire districts. He said it was known that the TMFPD and the SFPD were not sustainable in their current form. Chairman Breternitz asked if the last recommendation entailed providing scenarios that were not limited by current bounds and considered some “outside of the box” thinking. Mr. Latipow replied this item gave the opportunity to think outside the box.

In response to the call for public comment, the following individuals voiced their concerns, comments and opinions in regard to relocation of the Bowers Mansion crew, regionalization of fire services and response times: Mandy McNitt, Kim Toulouse, Jim Gubbels, William Coplin, Len Chyet, Donna Peterson, Alex Kukulus, Gary Schmidt, Cliff Low, Jane Countryman and Tom Motherway.

In regard to Option 4, which covered utilization of volunteers, Mr. Latipow said Chief Greene had indicated that was not a viable option. Commissioner Larkin stated that Mr. Latipow was seeking direction to review Option 1 and the recommendations placed on page four of the staff report. Mr. Latipow stated that was correct.

Commissioner Humke said some of the options had been declared not feasible and asked if Options 2 and 3 were still deemed not feasible. Mr. Latipow replied later in the agenda there would be a presentation to reinforce why those were removed as options.

Commissioner Jung believed this was the perfect time to begin considering regionalization of fire departments with a dedicated tax structure. She requested pursuing all options deemed feasible and that the two Fire Chiefs reassess what they deemed were not an option. She also suggested working with REMSA to see if a dedicated ambulance could be supplied to the Bowers Mansion area. Commissioner Jung thought it was good to be response-time focused in order to seek a broad-based change on how people pay for fire service with the crux placed on response times.

Chairman Breternitz agreed with those comments, but did not accept the recommendations as they stood and felt that “no” did not work. He said options, scenarios and alternatives needed to be presented on how to make something work while thinking outside of the box.

Mr. Latipow said regionalization could take on all different views models. He intentionally did not use the word “consolidation” in order to not hamstring the recommendation.

Commissioner Larkin moved to accept staff’s recommendations and to not take anything off the table. Commissioner Humke seconded the motion.

Commissioner Jung felt direction needed to be clearer since it had been stated for the viability of the fire departments to exist, further expanding was needed in

order to make the whole region better. Commissioner Larkin said the Board was agendized to deal with the TMFPD and the SFPD and felt this was a starting point.

Commissioner Humke said in order to work with another regional partner it would be required that every entity approach this on a similar basis, which was a dedicated tax rate, not the full faith and credit of a municipal entity. Chairman Breternitz indicated that was part of scenario development.

On call for the question, the motion passed on a 4 to 0 vote with Commissioner Weber absent.

TMFPD Chief Michael Hernandez commented there was a movement that spoke to a regionalized approach with different options and that there should be a separate and distinct funding source to eliminate certain levels of fluxuation and delivery of service. He reaffirmed his position that he was hired by and reported directly to the Reno City Manager and the Reno City Council and that the TMFPD Board contracted with the City of Reno. He took to heart the recommendations and concerns and would work closely with Mr. Latipow to address the issues.

11-22F AGENDA ITEM 7

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

Kurt Latipow, Fire Services Coordinator, stated during the course of the lengthy discussion regarding the information in the above item, the information for Agenda Item 7 had been covered.

There was no further action or public comment on this item.

11-23F AGENDA ITEM 8

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, stated during the course of the lengthy discussion regarding the information in the above item, the information for Agenda Item 8 had been covered.

There was no further action or public comment on this item.

11-24F AGENDA ITEM 9

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.)”

Commissioner Jung requested an agenda item be scheduled for the Joint Fire Board Advisory (JFAB) members about where to proceed in regard to regionalization and the items discussed.

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ADJOURNMENT

8:35 p.m. There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Humke, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Weber absent, 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*