

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

TUESDAY

11:00 a.m.

JANUARY 28, 2014

PRESENT:

David Humke, Chairman
Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairperson
Marsha Berkbigler, Commissioner
Vaughn Hartung, Commissioner
Kitty Jung, Commissioner

Nancy Parent, County Clerk
John Slaughter, County Manager
Paul Lipparelli, Legal Counsel
Charles Moore, Fire Chief

The Board convened at 11:26 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:

14-03F AGENDA ITEM 2

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

Michael Moll said he was a member of the newly formed Arrowcreek Fuel Reduction and Fire Safety Committee, and they urged the Board to approve the application for a wildland fuels reduction grant, which had to be submitted by February 13, 2014.

Cathy Brandhorst discussed matters of concern to herself.

14-04F CONSENT AGENDA ITEM 3A

Agenda Subject: “Approval of TMFPD Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting minutes from December 17, 2013.”

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Berkbigler, seconded by Commissioner Weber, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 3A be approved.

14-05F AGENDA ITEM 4

Agenda Subject: “Fire Chief Report: A) Report and discussion related to fire district operations, B) Monthly Statistics, C) Summary of the Volunteer Fire Departments responses December 201, and D) Blue Ribbon Committee Update.”

Fire Chief Charles Moore said regarding the grant application brought up during public comment, the Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) had a grant program and the grant applications were due February 14, 2014. He stated it was the District’s intent to apply for funds from that grant to conduct a study. He said the County was also looking to apply for funds to do fuel mitigation on the County’s properties around the Arrowcreek subdivision. He understood staff did not have to come before the Board to apply for the grant, but would have to come before the Board to accept the grant and appropriate the funds. He said that was why the grant application was not on the agenda.

Chief Moore said the *Washoe County Fuel Hazards and Assessment* document was produced in 2005 and assessed the hazard in each community from one end of the County to the other. He stated there had been a lot of changes since 2005 with fuels being burned off in some areas, fuels growing back in other areas, and development encroaching in other areas. He said staff believed it was time to take another look at the document, so the District would have an overarching look at where the problems were. He stated that would allow prioritizing the fuel management projects going forward according to the highest risks.

Chairman Humke said everyone had heard a lot about the drought, and he asked if there was any way to track the impact of the drought in the disparate areas throughout the County or were they affected pretty much the same. Chief Moore replied generally drought would affect everything about same. He stated in areas where there was sagebrush, which he would argue was a volatile fuel when there was moisture and when there was not. He said it was one of those plants that would burn in January if the conditions were right. He stated St. James’s Village and Galena had a higher risk of a conflagrating fire when the fuel moisture in the trees and in the large fuels dropped substantially. He said the District needed to look at those communities with 1,000 hour fuels being a bigger hazard for the District during sustained droughts due to the trees being distressed. He stated because they crowned, they could threaten an entire subdivision. He reiterated he believed the same risks were spread east to west and north to south.

Commissioner Berkbigler asked if there were things that could be done to prepare for what had the potential of being an extremely bad wildland fire season. Chief Moore said if appreciable moisture was not received by the spring, a concerted effort would have to be made to educate the public, because the District’s personnel could not be everywhere and was at Mother Nature’s mercy. He stated if the area was in the same conditions as it was three years ago, the District would have to have a substantial partnership with the homeowner associations and with individual citizens to be on guard, particularly when cold fronts came through the area. He discussed the predicted

upcoming weather patterns, and indicated there would be a better idea on what the area would be facing by the end of February. Commissioner Berkbigler commented she noticed plants along the river were starting to come up and everything was confused because the area's weather had been so incredibly warm. She said anything that grew now would be drying out and would add to the fire danger as the fire season approached. Chief Moore stated the fuel moisture index was at the lowest reading seen since the Washoe Drive and the Caughlin Ranch fires. He said if the area received some moisture on a steady basis between now and May, he believed it could recover to some extent. He stated he did not have any information on the long-term forecast, but some moisture was expected this week, which was good news.

Commissioner Jung said there were two fires on the same street and was that just a coincidence. Chief Moore felt it was purely coincidental.

Chief Moore said he met with the County's Internal Auditor. He stated the audit would be starting next week and the report should be ready by May 2014.

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

14-06F AGENDA ITEM 5

Agenda Subject: "Accept monetary donations from the Atlantis Casino of \$2,400 and the Peppermill Casino of \$2,400 to Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District totaling \$4,800.00 to support the Ash Can Program and direct Finance to make the appropriate budget adjustments. (All Commission Districts)"

Fire Chief Charles Moore said the ash can program had been hugely successful and the 300 ash cans the District had in inventory were already committed to people that had applied to the program. He stated if the Board approved the donations from the Atlantis and the Peppermill Casinos, it would allow the District to purchase 300 additional ash cans. He said the District was happy to see people taking such a keen interest in this fire-safety topic. He stated another fire was started by fireplace ashes down south, but it was detected early and was put out without too much damage to the home.

Commissioner Hartung thanked both the Atlantis and the Peppermill for their participation, because it was a great partnership. He requested some sort of formal recognition be done for them. He said this was a good program, which could not have been done without the County's community partners. Chief Moore said he would make that happen.

Chief Moore said the District was in the process of contacting the people who submitted applications, so they could come to the station or have them delivered by the firefighters during their shift. He stated the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts would assist in delivering the next allotment of ash cans.

Commissioner Weber thanked Commissioner Hartung for his leadership in the ash can program and the Atlantis and the Peppermill Casinos for their donations.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Berkgigler, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5 be accepted and directed.

14-07F AGENDA ITEM 6

Agenda Subject: “Approve the purchase of one (1) new type I structure engine from Pierce Mfg., Inc., 2600 American Drive, Appleton, Wisconsin 54913 in the amount of \$469,444.08.”

Fire Chief Charles Moore said the District intended to purchase two new water tenders with this amount but, based on the ability to negotiate the same price as that for the previous bid, the District would save \$60,000 if it purchased the structural engine now and deferred the purchase of the water tenders to next year. He stated it was anticipated staff would recommend during the next Fiscal Year budget, to take the rescue at the Bowers Station, Station 30, to an engine and the current engine at Station 16 would move to the Bowers Station. He advised the engine still had 77,000 miles on it until it would need to be replaced, so it was still serviceable. He noted Bowers did not run a lot of calls, and it should serve Bowers well for a few more years. He said staff felt \$60,000 was a significant amount of money to save, and there would be a substantial price increase occurring during the next year for the engine. He stated it was not expected there would be much of a price increase for the water tenders, so this seemed like a logical decision.

Commissioner Hartung asked if the new engine would have four-wheel drive. Chief Moore replied it did not. Commissioner Hartung asked how the inclement weather situations would be dealt with, especially in Washoe Valley. Chief Moore replied the engine was equipped with automatic chains. He said if icy conditions were encountered, a button in the cab would be pushed, and a device would come down and throw the chains under the tires as the vehicle moved. He said full tire chains could also be put on to handle deep snow or, if conditions were really bad, a brush engine could be used because they were equipped with four-wheel drive. He noted four-wheel drive added a substantial cost and the snow only got really deep in Galena and St. James’s Village. He said with good drivers and the aforementioned tools, they usually got through the snow. Commissioner Hartung stated he never heard of automatic chains. Chief Moore said they were great and even the school busses used them, and he explained they ran around \$8,000. Commissioner Hartung noted that was substantially less than the cost for four-wheel drive.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Berkbigler, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 6 be approved.

14-08F AGENDA ITEM 7

Agenda Subject: “Discussion and possible action regarding an interim method of financial support to Volunteer Fire Departments. (All Commission Districts)”

Fire Chief Charles Moore said funding the volunteer fire departments was being looked at. He noted the payments had been made directly to the volunteer fire departments based on how big they were and how many calls they responded to, but it was discovered the authorization for those payments expired. He stated staff was developing new agreements, but was recommending an interim step in the meantime. He said this step would offer the volunteers some financial support, which also included the Sierra Fire Protection District’s volunteers, who had not received any support in the past. He said the proposal would offer each volunteer fire agency \$8,000 in the form of a cost center account. He said they would submit a requisition to the District when they needed something. He stated the request would be reviewed and the District could make the purchase or authorize the volunteer agency to make the purchase and be reimbursed. He stated he liked that system better than writing a check, because it allowed everyone to know what the money was being spent on, and was the method he wanted to put in the new agreements. He stated this support would be paid for with line-item savings in other areas, but meant allocating an additional \$29,000 for this purpose to the volunteer fire departments, which were listed on page 2 of the staff report.

Commissioner Hartung asked for the volunteer response times to the rural and frontier interfaces along with, for example, the response times of Station 17 to the Palomino Valley or to Warm Springs. Chief Moore said he recalled the Standards of Cover the County adopted had the rural response time at 20 minutes, and for frontier, as District getting there when it could. He stated that could certainly be tested to see how the District was measuring up.

There was no public comment on this item.

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

14-09F AGENDA ITEM 8

Agenda Subject: “Approve the retention of Kafoury, Armstrong & Company to perform Independent Audit Services for Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District for fiscal year 2013/14 in an amount not to exceed \$22,500.”

Fire Chief Charles Moore noted this agenda item was pulled. He said there were some last minute adjustments in the amount of the fee so there would be a better proportional split of the audit fees between the Sierra Fire Protection District and the

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District. He stated those numbers would be adjusted and brought back to the Board at the next meeting.

14-10F AGENDA ITEM 9

Agenda Subject: “Approve the retention of Kafoury, Armstrong & Company to perform Independent Audit Services for Sierra Fire Protection District for fiscal year 2013/14 in an amount not to exceed \$20,840.”

This agenda item was pulled. See the comments for Agenda Item 8.

14-11F AGENDA ITEM 10

Agenda Subject: “Commissioners’/Fire Chief’s 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.)”

There were no Board member comments.

14-12F AGENDA ITEM 11

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

Cathy Brandhorst discussed issues of concern to herself.

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12:01 p.m. There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Berkbigler, which motion duly carried, the meeting was adjourned.

DAVID HUMKE, Chairman
Truckee Meadows Fire
Protection District and Sierra
Fire Protection District

ATTEST:

NANCY PARENT, Washoe County Clerk
and Ex-Officio Clerk, Truckee Meadows
Fire Protection District and Sierra Fire
Protection District

*Minutes Prepared By:
Jan Frazzetta, Deputy County Clerk*