

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

TUESDAY

9:00 a.m.

MAY 19, 2015

PRESENT:

**Marsha Berkgigler, Chair**  
**Kitty Jung, Vice Chair**  
**Vaughn Hartung, Commissioner**  
**Jeanne Herman, Commissioner**  
**Bob Lucey, Commissioner**

**Nancy Parent, County Clerk**  
**David Watts-Vial, Legal Counsel**  
**Charles Moore, Fire Chief**

The Board convened at 9:08 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:

**15-0068F      AGENDA ITEM 3**

**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.”

Fire Chief Richard Boykin, Cold Springs Volunteer Fire Department, spoke about the majority of the volunteers’ having issues with the Transition Plan being considered by the Board in Agenda Item 6. He said they requested the Plan’s adoption be delayed until the volunteers had the opportunity to provide input to the Plan. A copy of his comments was placed on file with the Clerk.

Debbie Sheltra said she was speaking about SB 185 and the City of Reno’s Mayor stating the City only wanted to consider consolidation due to automatic aid being a band-aid approach. She requested the Board not talk with the City of Reno until the City’s fire service had a dedicated funding source like the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) had. She said the Interlocal Contract for fire services with the City of Reno had not worked before and there was no reason to assume it would work now. She said if the City of Reno was serious about working in the best interests of the citizens, they should agree to a two-year period of automatic aid with the TMFPD. A copy of Ms. Sheltra’s comments and an e-mail from Jane Countryman to Commissioner Lucey were placed on file with the Clerk.

Nancy Parent, County Clerk, read an e-mail from Dorothy Ramsdell into the record regarding automatic aid.

**CONSENT AGENDA – ITEMS 4A THROUGH 4C**

**15-0069F      AGENDA ITEM 4A**

**Agenda Subject:** “Approval of minutes from Board of Fire Commissioners meeting February 24, 2015 and March 24, 2015.”

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 4A be approved.

**15-0070F      AGENDA ITEM 4B**

**Agenda Subject:** “Approve the Annual Operating Plan for Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement between U.S. Forest Service – Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District which includes the Sheriff’s RAVEN helicopter program for the anticipated deployment term of May 16, 2015 to October 14, 2015.”

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 4B be approved.

**15-0071F      AGENDA ITEM 4C**

**Agenda Subject:** “Discussion and possible adoption of a resolution authorizing overtime and portal to portal pay for Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District employees.”

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 4C be adopted. The Resolution for same is attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

**15-0072F      AGENDA ITEM 5**

**Agenda Subject:** “Fire Chief Report: A) Report and discussion related to fire district operations, B) Career Statistics’ and Report for April 2015, and C) Volunteer Statistics’ and Report for April 2015.”

Fire Chief Charles Moore advised the only structure fire in the last 2.5 months caused no major damage to a shed in Sun Valley. He stated he was proud of the citizens for being extra cautious and safe.

Commissioner Herman felt additional time was needed for the volunteers to get some communications going. Chair Berkgigler believed Commissioner Herman was talking about Agenda Item 6, because Agenda Item 4C was just the statistics for the volunteers.

Commissioner Hartung commented the District's staff was doing a great job, because he had been getting nothing but positive feedback from the community. He said the lack of structure fires was not due to anything we had done, other than making people aware of possible dangers and passing out smoke detectors. Chief Moore noted the volunteers assisted in distributing the smoke detectors.

Commissioner Herman said Chief Moore deserved a raise. She stated she hoped the Chief stayed here for a long time, because he was doing a beautiful job.

There was no public comment on this item.

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

**15-0073F      AGENDA ITEM 6**

**Agenda Subject: "Discussion and possible approval of a transition plan for Volunteer Fire Services and direct the Fire Chief to implement the plan."**

Fire Chief Charles Moore said he articulated the reasons in January 2015 regarding why the present structure of the volunteer force was not optimal. He advised he supported the volunteer service and wanted it to continue, but he wanted to see it become affective. He said over the last three years, he had been able to analyze the volunteers' performance and response. He said the Transition Plan came out of having eight autonomous volunteer agencies within the District each with their own Chief. He found the most substantial problem was how training was delivered and documented. He stated if there was an accident involving a volunteer, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) would request to see the training records for that person, which he would not be able to provide because he did not have them.

Chief Moore stated another issue was all of the volunteer departments wanted to be all risk, but the ability of the District's staff to deliver training to new members was more than they could do. He said structure fires required 260 hours of training, along with the ongoing training needed to keep their skill level fresh, while only one half of one percent of the District's calls were for structure fires. He felt now that the career side was up and running and provided a very well-oiled response, often the fires

were extinguished prior to the volunteers getting to their station. He stated their opportunities to get to a structure fire were few. He said the volunteers wanted to participate, but the District needed them to participate in a way that supplemented the career side and would actually provide some benefit. He said the strategy should be for the volunteers not to do all risk, but to provide support. He stated the need was for them to be wildland firefighters, which did not involve a big learning curve, along with them being emergency medical service (EMS) responders. He said they could fight structure fires if adequately trained, because he would not put any volunteer in harms way. He said what was needed was for the volunteers to provide support on structure fires and not to be combat firefighters on the end of a nozzle.

Chief Moore said communications were another issue, because he was not sure the messages to the Chiefs were being filtered down into the ranks. He stated there needed to be an understanding that about \$800,000 per year was being spent on the volunteer program, and the deployment analysis needed to look at what stations needed to do what.

Chief Moore felt the appropriate strategy for the volunteers was they needed to protect the rural fringe, provide some measure of backup to the career side, and provide backup during peak activity. He agreed some changes need to be made to narrow the volunteers' mission to make it more specific. He said a lot of time was being spent trying to determine if the volunteers were in compliance regarding their training. He advised getting the volunteers up to the standards for physicals required by the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) took a year, and it would be a lot more efficient to centralize the management of the volunteers.

Chief Moore said he met with each individual volunteer agency to explain what needed to be done and, if anyone said that had not been done, it was not true. He stated he met with the Chiefs on a monthly basis to try and explain his concerns and to listen to their concerns, but not enough progress was made in the last 2.5 years to resolve the issues. He said he and a consultant from ESCI looked at the specific issues and he met with Legal Counsel, Risk Management, Human Resources, and departments that had a lot to say about how the risk was managed.

Commissioner Jung felt this item should either be sped up or continued due to all of the people waiting for the Proclamations. She said the last time this was done, the people had to wait two hours to receive their Proclamations. Chair Berkgigler felt the staff report was very clear. She said she did not see anything in the major elements of reform that dictated exactly what would be done, and she felt this was the planning stage for moving forward. Chief Moore advised specific steps needed to be taken to get this done. Commissioner Jung said this was direction given to the Chief when he first came on board. She stated she had known for seven years that the training delivery and documentation did not exist and communications were not part of the volunteer packet. She said the Board did not want to put volunteers out fighting fires if they were not capable of assisting the District's career firefighters, because that put both the volunteers and the career firefighters at risk. She stated it needed to be recognized

what the volunteers' assets were, and she felt there should be no further delay on implementing this. She agreed there should be some input from the volunteers, but ultimately he was the Chief and he needed to be the one to say where they could be used. She said in the unincorporated areas, the Chief had flexibility in staffing, which should be true for the volunteers also. Commissioner Hartung said he concurred, because it would reduce the liability and risk to the District and increase the volunteers' skills. He said any of the volunteers who were serious would be thrilled to do this, because the training could lead to a career spot when there was an opening. He stated no blindsiding was done, but this was something that had been discussed and discussed. He said the District had liabilities and had to cover itself.

Commissioner Herman said she would be happy to work with the Chief anytime to help mend fences. She stated it looked like a good program, but she wanted to make sure it was right for everybody.

In response to the call for public comment, John Howe, Silver Lake Volunteer Fire Department, spoke about the volunteers' past relationship with the District, the changes to the dispatch procedures, and the legal ownership of the vehicles and stations. He said the Plan should be adopted only after more extensive examination by the District and the Volunteer Firefighters Association in a transparent process. A copy of his comments was placed on file with the Clerk.

Kim Toulouse said he had been supportive of doing changes to the volunteer program for a very long time, and the Transition Plan was a needed step the process. He reviewed the details he felt were lacking in the Plan, which were outlined in a copy of his comments placed on file with the Clerk. He said he supported the Transition Plan, but felt it needed to be tweaked a little. He stated many firefighters' careers got started by being a volunteer. A copy of a memo from Mr. Toulouse to Chief Moore regarding the Transition Plan was placed on file with the Clerk.

Chief Steven Reich, Verdi Volunteer Fire Department, said he supported Chief Moore, the TMFPD, and the Transition Plan.

Commissioner Jung said a deployment timeline should be identified as the Transition Plan moved forward. She mentioned the position the Board approved for Captain Winchester was for the District's Volunteer Coordinator and the Public Information Officer.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 6 be approved and the Fire Chief be directed to implement the Transition Plan.

**15-0074F      AGENDA ITEM 7**

**Agenda Subject: "Approve the FY 2015/16 Health Benefits Program for District employees, dependents and retirees at an estimated annual cost of \$1,617,461 and**

**authorize the Chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners to execute all insurance contracts and service agreements pertinent to the Health Benefits Program.”**

There was no public comment on this item.

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

**15-0075F      AGENDA ITEM 8**

**Agenda Subject: “Discussion and possible direction to staff regarding topics for a possible concurrent meeting with the City of Reno and City of Sparks regarding fire merger.”**

Chair Berkbigler said there was a request from the City of Reno to hold a concurrent meeting to discuss the potential for a fire merger between the City of Reno and the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD). She stated the City of Reno had a meeting where they outlined the details of their proposal, and she wanted to go into the meeting with a similar document. She asked if the Commissioners had any ideas regarding items to be addressed before moving forward with any serious discussion about a merger.

Commissioner Herman stated the Blue Ribbon Committee recommended waiting until an automatic aid agreement was worked out, see if it worked, and then go forward. Chair Berkbigler said she was supportive of the study, but the City of Reno asked to meet with the Commission to discuss the issues; and she felt it was incumbent on the Commission to do so, which was why she was encouraging holding the meeting.

Commissioner Hartung said he would like to see a staff report from the City of Reno showing what their proposals were. He stated he would like to see an automatic aid agreement first rather than jumping straight into a full-fledged merger. He noted SB 185 only outlined assistance with fire, but he felt the District was more valuable with respect to the emergency medical services (EMS). He stated he would like to see what the City of Reno proposed in writing, which gave him the opportunity to digest and understand the proposal and then write down his thoughts so they could be incorporated into a report along with the other Commissioners’ thoughts. He said after that was done would be the time to have a meeting. He stated he was a little reticent to have the meeting without understanding the full scope of the City of Reno’s proposal. Commissioner Lucey said he agreed with Commissioner Hartung that the conversation should be about automatic aid, which had been a constant theme in regards to the constituents he spoke with.

Commissioner Jung said she wanted to ensure either entity would be subsidizing the other. She stated there would have to be a dedicated revenue source, which could either be a tax or a percentage that both entities determined would be the

proper amount to fund their part of the fire services for this region. She felt there should be regional oversight, which might include another elected Board that would have equal representation for the jurisdictions. She said there should only be one Chief and should include all of the fire agencies in the area, which was the best practice and was much safer in terms of communication and coordination. She stated there also needed to be flexibility in staffing outside of the densely populated areas, which would be based on the collected data and the probabilities of certain things happening. She felt in the densely populated urban areas, it should never change from being a four-person crew. She stated it was critical to discuss those things and to go into the meeting speaking with one voice.

Chair Berkgigler said those were the items on her list. She noted Agenda Item 6 indicated the City of Sparks would be at the meeting, which she was not sure would happen because of the bill moving through the Legislature.

Commissioner Jung said one of the areas of conflict was when the City of Reno annexed an area that was part of the District, the County lost that tax base but the City of Reno did not put in any more money in with which to respond to any need in that annexed area. She said there needed to be a conversation on making annexation equitable for everybody. She stated that was not just about fire, but had to do with water, sewer, and so on.

Commissioner Hartung stated he would like time to digest what the proposals were and to give them some thought, because once burned twice shy. Chair Berkgigler said she had no intention to rush this, and the meeting on May 26th would be a preliminary discussion. She said the TMFPD was an excellent fire department and the Chief was doing a superb job. She stated automatic aid would be an additional benefit to the County and the Cities, and would certainly be a step in the right direction. She said the Blue Ribbon study indicated one regional fire department would be the best way to save taxpayer dollars at some point. She agreed she wanted to see Reno's proposal first, but she had no control over that.

Commissioner Jung said she did not believe this was being rushed, because she had been dealing with this issue for eight years. She stated this was a new Board and the City of Reno had a new Council. She felt we should remove the ego component and think about what would be best for public safety as a region, which started with automatic aid. She said if there was any way to entice the City of Reno to do automatic aid, she supported moving forward with what Reno requested.

Commissioner Hartung said since this also had to do with the County as a whole, should John Slaughter, County Manager, be a part of the conversation. Chair Berkgigler stated he was a part of the conversation.

Chair Berkgigler asked if staff had enough direction. Fire Chief Charles Moore said he could work with the County Manager. He asked if the Board was requesting he do a staff report. Chair Berkgigler said they were requesting a staff report

that outlined the items just identified, which could be used for discussion purposes at the meeting.

In response to the call for public comment, Thomas Daly stated he supported having a meeting with the City of Reno regarding this issue, but not on May 26th. He said the Senate would vote on SB 185 in 90 minutes, but the Assembly would not vote on the bill before May 26th. He said the Labor agreement had not been made public, and he asked if it contained the exclusive right to serve clause as the existing contract did. He said it had to be determined how the exclusive right to serve would affect any potential agreement, whether it was for automatic aid or a merger. He said the City of Reno versus the TMFPD lawsuit was before the Judge and the Board should know what the ruling was before holding a meeting, because it would be a potential \$600,000 hit if the District lost.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that staff be directed to prepare a staff report outlining the items previously discussed for the concurrent meeting on May 26, 2015.

**15-0076F      AGENDA ITEM 9**

**Agenda Subject: “Discussion and possible approval or modification of a list of evaluators for a 360 degree evaluation for the Fire Chief’s annual performance review and direction to staff to develop a survey and distribute the survey to the evaluators and an acceptance of the organizational chart as requested by Vice Chair Jung.”**

Commissioner Hartung asked if this agenda item would allow the Board to take action on Fire Chief Charles Moore’s compensation. David Watts-Vial, Legal Counsel, replied it did not.

Commissioner Jung thanked the Chief for the list of possible evaluators. She suggested adding a Volunteer Fire Chief, someone who would be the most fair and balanced; a line firefighter; and Maureen O’Brien to the list. Commissioner Lucey suggested adding someone representing the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA) and Kim Toulouse.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Lucey, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that the list of evaluators be approved with the inclusions of the names suggested by Commissioner Jung and Commissioner Lucey. It was further ordered that staff be directed to develop a survey and distribute the survey to the evaluators and that the organizational chart requested by Vice Chair Jung be accepted.



**PUBLIC HEARING**

**15-0077F      AGENDA ITEM 10**

**Agenda Subject: “Discussion and action on the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Tentative Budget, as well as possible changes to the adoption of the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-16.”**

This item was not heard because the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Budget was adopted on May 25, 2015.

**15-0078F      AGENDA ITEM 11**

**Agenda Subject: “Discussion and action on the Sierra Fire Protection District Tentative Budget, as well as possible changes to the adoption of the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-16.”**

This item was not heard because the Sierra Fire Protection District Budget was adopted on May 25, 2015.

**15-0079F      AGENDA ITEM 12**

**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).**

Chief Moore said SB 185 was under consideration by the Senate this morning.

Commissioner Herman suggested Chief Moore should decide how long he needed for Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) meetings, because it was important business that should not be rushed.

**15-0080F      AGENDA ITEM 13**

**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.”**

Sam Dehne spoke about his background and what he did for the community.

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**10:13 a.m.** There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion by Commissioner Lucey, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion duly carried, the meeting was adjourned.

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**MARSHA BERKBIGLER**, Chair  
Truckee Meadows Fire  
Protection District and Sierra  
Fire Protection District

**ATTEST:**

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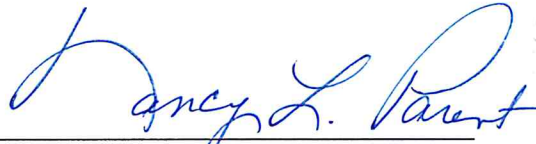
**NANCY PARENT**, Washoe County Clerk  
and Ex-Officio Clerk, Truckee Meadows  
Fire Protection District and Sierra Fire  
Protection District

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

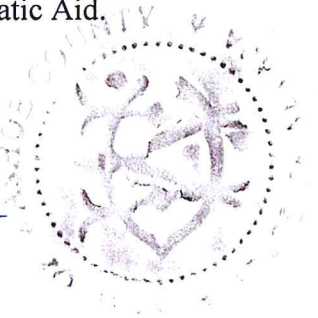
**CALL AND NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING**

**TO THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD  
OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS OF THE  
COUNTY OF WASHOE, STATE OF NEVADA**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** by the County Clerk of the County of Washoe, State of Nevada, that a special concurrent meeting of the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners, the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Board of Fire Commissioners and the Sierra Fire Protection District Board of Fire Commissioners has been called by the Chairman thereof and will be held in the Reno City Council Chamber, One East First Street, Reno, Nevada, at 1.30 p.m. on Monday, June 15, 2015 for discussion, action and overview of: Regional Dispatch, Consolidation, Regionalization, Blue Ribbon Committee, and Automatic Aid.



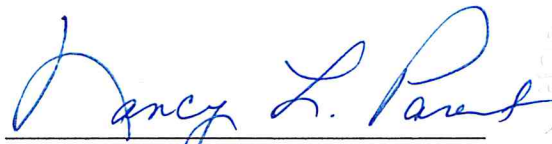
NANCY PARENT, County Clerk and  
Ex-Officio Clerk, Truckee Meadows  
Fire Protection District and Sierra Fire  
Protection District



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NANCY PARENT, County Clerk and  
Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners

