

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
TRUCKEE MEADOWS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT (TMFPD)
SIERRA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT (SFPD)**

TUESDAY

9:00 a.m.

DECEMBER 15, 2015

PRESENT:

Marsha Berkbigler, 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 9:00 a.m. in regular session in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, the Clerk called the roll and the Board conducted the following business:

15-0185F AGENDA ITEM 3 Public Comment.

Ian Satterfield, International Association of Firefighters Local 3895 President, stated Local 3895 hosted a blackjack tournament which raised \$5,000 for the Northern Nevada Children's Cancer Foundation. He said five to six families would receive money in the form of gift cards for food and fuel during a St. Baldrick's Foundation event at Fire Station 36.

CONSENT ITEMS 4A THROUGH 4B

15-0186F 4A Approval of minutes from the November 17, 2015 meeting.

15-0187F 4B Possible consideration and authorization to reclassify the five (5) remaining Firefighter/EMT Intermediate positions to Firefighter/Paramedic positions as they become vacant or to reclassify when a currently employed Firefighter/EMT Intermediate employee completes the District requirements to become a Firefighter/Paramedic, whichever occurs first.

There was no public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Lucey, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that the Consent Agenda Items 4A through 4B be approved.

15-0188F **AGENDA ITEM 5** Presentation by Washoe County Health District -
Emergency Medical Services Oversight Program.

Christina Conti, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Program Manager, gave a PowerPoint presentation which provided details about the Health District, EMS, the EMS Oversight Interlocal Agreement, the EMS Advisory Board, the Regional Oversight Program, program duties, accomplishments and current projects with regional partners. She introduced members of her staff, Brittany Dayton, EMS Coordinator, and Heather Kerwin, Statistician.

Commissioner Jung expressed the importance of having an individual identification number assigned to a patient, client or victim, which would follow the individual starting with the emergency call. She asked whether this had been implemented.

Ms. Conti stated there was not an individual identification number. She said it was her understanding that even with the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) to CAD in place, there still would not be an individual identification number assigned. Each entity would assign their own number to a patient.

Commissioner Jung believed the Board needed to put more pressure on the entities to implement an individual identification number for the purpose of measuring the quality of care and the process. She also believed there should be a deadline for the implementation.

Commissioner Hartung agreed an individual identification number would be imperative for tracking patients. He noted the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) crews in the outlying areas provided information which was not always consistent with the information provided by the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA).

Ms. Conti noted while each entity did not have the same patient identification number, Ms. Kerwin was successful at matching 99 percent of the calls between entities and the Health District was still able to track patients. She mentioned quality improvement was another part of the process. Since the Health District did not receive patient care records, it relied on the investigation process to identify the different treatments that occurred. In response to a question by Commissioner Hartung regarding REMSA staffing, Ms. Conti remarked it was not the Health District's place to tell REMSA how to run their business; however, they did provide REMSA with their expectations. She was unsure how REMSA would handle their staffing process.

Chair Berkbigler thought the creation of one numbering system would simplify the process for all entities involved.

Ms. Conti concluded having one numbering system would be a daunting task due to the number of entities involved, but she hoped it would happen.

On the call for public comment, Thomas Daly expressed his concerns regarding REMSA being subsidized by tax payers. He stated no one knew how often and for what duration of time the fire departments were providing services to REMSA. He said the information was not being reported or collected, and REMSA was a monopoly which denied him the opportunity to have an alternate emergency service provider. He was also concerned REMSA had not agreed to the proposed set of terms and conditions within the Mutual Aid Agreement with the TMFPD regarding REMSA's ambulance response.

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

15-0189F **AGENDA ITEM 6** Fire Chief Report: A. Report and discussion related to fire district operations; B. Career Statistics' and Report for November 2015; C. Volunteer Statistics' and Report for November 2015.

Charles Moore, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief, stated he and the County Manager's staff came up with an immediate plan to continue service in Gerlach in light of the recent resignations. The plan would be for the TMFPD to staff the Gerlach Fire Station 24 hours a day until a new plan was formulated. He noted meeting industry and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards was a challenge for the volunteer firefighters throughout the County's system. He added he did not believe meeting the standards were onerous; however, it was a challenge for the volunteer firefighters to find time to meet them. He concluded by stating the TMFPD would step in with a professional staff consisting of a fire captain and a paramedic firefighter to ensure there would not be a lapse in service.

Commissioner Herman said she saw this issue coming. She noted she had the letters of resignations in her hand, which were placed on file with the Clerk.

Chair Berkbigler asked if the TMFPD could send someone to Gerlach to provide training to anyone who wanted it.

Chief Moore replied the TMFPD could send someone there. He added the TMFPD had a record of communications with Gerlach which were replete with offers to provide training. The TMFPD had gone to the Gerlach Station to test their ladders, hoses, fire pumps and to complete various other testing which was a practice that would continue. He stated the training component was not onerous, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) compliance took very little time and the ambulance license sign-off process took three hours every two years. He remarked the firefighting skills took the most amount of time but that some of it could be completed in-house. He

mentioned it had been difficult to coordinate a suitable time for the TMFPD to provide training in Gerlach due to the volunteer firefighters' availability.

Chair Berkbigler stated Gerlach was technically outside the TMFPD's footprint. She noted the importance of having a paramedic on the ambulance in Gerlach.

Chief Moore said Gerlach's ambulance was only able to provide Intermediate Life Support so the TMFPD would be upgrading it to offer Advanced Life Support. He stated he was confident some of the volunteer firefighters would return and there would also be new volunteers. He added there were five to seven volunteer firefighters, of which, only three actually lived in Gerlach proper. The main issue was that volunteer firefighters had very little fire experience. The main demand was for Emergency Medical Service (EMS), so the TMFPD wanted to ensure EMS was available. He said the TMFPD would speak to the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe and the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA) in the event additional support was required. In regards to wildland fire protection, he added the County contracted with the Nevada Department of Forestry.

Commissioner Lucey asked whether there would be a personnel strain for the TMFPD to provide coverage in Gerlach. He also asked if there was a worst case scenario plan if the TMFPD and the County Manager's Office were unable to find a solution to the situation in Gerlach. He mentioned the possibility of making the Gerlach Fire Station a paid station or bringing it under the footprint of the TMFPD. He inquired about the fiscal ramifications of those scenarios.

Chief Moore thought the TMFPD had enough depth within its staffing to cover Gerlach. He stated it was unlike an out-of-district assignment where the TMFPD firefighters would take on a wildland assignment for two weeks at a time in some other jurisdiction. The situation was more in line with an out-of-district deployment, so the TMFPD firefighters would be in Gerlach for 48 hours at a time. He added providing coverage in Gerlach would place some minor strain on some employees' time off. In regards to the worst case scenarios, he discussed four governance models which could be put in place to establish a long-term service for Gerlach. 1) The TMFPD could extend its boundaries to cover Gerlach, which would require a financial study to see if the TMFPD could afford to do that. 2) There could be a new fire protection district established in Gerlach. 3) The Legislature passed legislation to allow for the creation of a Rangeland Fire Protection Association. 4) A Gerlach General Improvement District would have fire protection powers.

Chief Moore also spoke about the turnaround time to transport a patient from Gerlach to the Renown Regional Medical Center. He noted the turnaround time was eight hours, which for a volunteer firefighter was a lot of time. He discussed the possibility of having another ambulance meet a transport halfway in order to lessen the turnaround time. He said it would take a little more thought to come up with other solutions, which would be presented at the appropriate time once they were vetted.

Commissioner Lucey requested staff to present a vetted process to the Board by January since there would have been at least two weeks of operations by that time.

Commissioner Hartung asked whether Gerlach had an airport to land a fixed-wing aircraft. He mentioned the TMFPD could potentially hire a medical ambulance service which could be faster and cheaper.

Chief Moore replied that he believed there was a landing strip, but he remarked the time had come for Gerlach to have a full-time employee to manage fire and EMS. Initially it would not have to be a Fire Chief position, but could be a Fire Protection Officer position which he added was used very successfully by the Nevada Department of Forestry in prior years. The Fire Protection Officer would be the coordinator whose duties would include the recruitment of volunteers, the management of fire prevention issues, and organizing responses. He added Bill Gooch, Gerlach Volunteer Fire Department Chief, had done an outstanding job for many years. He felt the solution would be for Gerlach to have at least one full-time employee with some intermediate support from the TMFPD. He mentioned the TMFPD's contract with the County required the TMFPD to provide oversight and training support, but not to actually manage the fire service in Gerlach.

Chair Berkbigler stated it was time for the County to place a full-time firefighter in Gerlach.

Chief Moore mentioned open burning had been difficult to do during the past few winters due to drought conditions; however, this was the first winter where conditions approached normal. He mentioned the TMFPD would like to see open burning occur when it was safe but there were conflicts with the County's Health District regulations for air quality.

Amy Ray, TMFPD Fire Marshal, explained open burning generally occurred in the spring and the fall. This was an effective program for residents to manage their vegetation, and mitigate their fields and defensible space. The TMFPD issued permits with strict regulations. She said open burning was shut down on red-flag days or on days with large wind events. She mentioned during the past year over 400 residents took advantage of the program. She discussed the need to work with the Air Quality Management Division regarding open burning. She stated when residents called to see if they could burn, the TMFPD responded to and enforced the Air Quality Management Division's regulations and not the TMFPD's open burning regulations. She added even when outlying areas; such as, Red Rock, Gerlach and Palomino Valley were outside the inversion area, residents were not allowed to burn.

Commissioner Hartung asked whether Spanish Springs could be included with the outlying areas since they had some of the same issues. Ms. Ray stated the TMFPD would look at the County as a whole.

Chief Moore said there would be an agenda item in January to discuss dispatch. He stated he met with the Sparks Fire Chief who advised that Sparks had completed their Tiburon upgrade. Once Tiburon upgrades had been completed, the next issue would be the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) to CAD component which was very important towards meeting the short-term goals. He believed in the long-term, dispatch would work more efficiently if it was in one location. He noted having CAD to CAD would help manage incidents since there were issues concerning information sharing between the Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) Center and REMSA.

15-0190F **AGENDA ITEM 7** Approve and execute final settlement and title paperwork with a closing date of December 28, 2015 for the acquisition of property located in the vicinity of Foothill Road and S Virginia Street (APN 044-300-09 and a portion of APN 044-300-10) to accommodate the replacement of Fire Station #14 in the total amount of \$1,310,577.69 including \$3,577.79 in escrow charges.

Chief Moore stated the parcel map had been recorded. Once the property closed, an architect would work on the Special Use Permit (SUP). Once the SUP was completed, the design process would begin. He hoped the groundbreaking would take place in the fall.

There was no public comment on this item.

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

The following agenda item #8 was heard by the Washoe County Board of Commissioners who convened solely as the Board of Fire Commissioners for the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District

15-0191F **AGENDA ITEM 8** Review and acceptance of the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District's Audited Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2015.

Vicki Van Buren, TMFPD Fiscal Officer, read the staff report.

In response to a question by Commissioner Hartung regarding a potential funds transfer violation, Ms. Van Buren stated she spoke to the Nevada Department of Taxation and they asked her to provide a management letter stating that the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) did not believe a violation occurred when the budget was presented. She noted the Nevada Department of Taxation approved the budget and the transfers were approved within the budget. She added in the future the TMFPD would be more careful when transferring funds.

Commissioner Hartung stated he did not want the TMFPD to be in a state of violation even though the Nevada Department of Taxation said it was not a big deal.

Ms. Van Buren responded it was not her understanding it was a big deal and that the Nevada Department of Taxation was aware of the issue.

On motion by Commissioner Lucey, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 8 be accepted.

The following agenda item #9 was heard by the Washoe County Board of Commissioners who convened solely as the Board of Fire Commissioners for the Sierra Fire Protection District.

15-0192F **AGENDA ITEM 9** Review and acceptance of the Sierra Fire Protection District's Audited Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2015.

Vicki Van Buren, Fiscal Officer, read the staff report.

Chair Berkbigler asked which fiscal year the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District and the Sierra Fire Protection District would be merging.

Ms. Van Buren stated the merger was scheduled to occur on June 30, 2016.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Lucey, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 9 be accepted.

15-0193F **AGENDA ITEM 11** Announcements/Reports.

Commissioner Jung mentioned that the International Association of Firefighters Local 3895 might experience the same problem as the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA) in terms of staff retention and recruitment. She asked Charles Moore, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief, to provide data regarding the TMFPD's retention plan. The data was to include the possible effects mass hiring by other entities would have on the TMFPD, how the TMFPD was going to retain firefighters, and how other entities' employment packages compared to the TMFPD's. She commented she did not want the TMFPD to be the training grounds for other organizations. Chief Moore said he would provide the data in January.

Commissioner Lucey concurred with Commissioner Jung's request and he asked for the TMFPD's plan regarding staff development. He wanted to ensure the firefighters had the support they needed as they moved through their careers with the TMFPD.

15-0194F **AGENDA ITEM 12** Public Comment.

Anthony Stobiecki stated residents in the Long Valley area had been trying for some time to get Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and fire protection. He

noted Gerlach was approximately 90 miles south of Long Valley, and it was difficult for EMS or fire service in Gerlach to respond in a timely manner. He said there used to be a letter of agreement with the Cedarville, California Fire Department in the mid-2000s that was now null and void. He stated residents were still waiting to get an answer from the County regarding a letter of agreement. He remarked that Commissioner Herman was the only one who reached out to the Long Valley residents. He added since the volunteer firefighters in Gerlach quit, the only source for fire permits was in the Reno area where there was no conception of what went on in Long Valley.

Katherine Snedigar said she was really excited when the volunteer fire department was set up in Palomino Valley. She added that it ended up being a disappointment since the volunteers were unable to participate in firefighting unless they took an operators' physical. She mentioned an incident where her house was saved by the volunteer firefighters. She noted Palomino residents paid for fire protection but did not receive it.

15-0195F **AGENDA ITEM 10** Possible Closed Session pursuant to NRS 288.220 for the purpose of discussing with management representatives labor matters and negotiations.

10:17 a.m. On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Lucey, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that the meeting recess to a closed session for the purpose of discussing negotiations with Employee Organizations per NRS 288.220, and to adjourn following the closed session.

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11:43 a.m. At the conclusion of the closed session, there being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

MARSHA BERKBIGLER, Chair
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:
Michael Siva, Deputy County Clerk