

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

TUESDAY

9:00 a.m.

FEBRUARY 21, 2017

PRESENT:

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

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

The Board convened at 9:04 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:

17-016F AGENDA ITEM 3 Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

17-017F AGENDA ITEM 4 Commissioners’/Fire Chief’s announcements, requests for information, topics for future agendas, and statements relating to items not on the Agenda.

Fire Chief Charles Moore reported a recent avalanche; one vehicle was partially trapped and the occupants were rescued. Commissioner Berkbigler directed Chief Moore to bring back a report about the number of firefighters who were trained as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) by the fire department. Chair Lucey requested a proclamation in memory of former Sierra Fire Protection District (SFPD) Chief Mike Greene.

CONSENT ITEMS

17-018F 5A Approval of minutes from the January 17, 2017 meeting.

17-019F 5B Discussion and possible approval of the renewal for a supplemental Employee Assistance Program through the ESI Group for District employees and dependents at an estimated cost of \$3,472.00 for 2017 Calendar year.

17-020F **5D** Recommendation to approve extra work authorizations in the amount of \$40,350 for Civil Design Services between Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District and CFA, Inc. to provide professional services as defined in Attachment A of the extra work authorizations dated September 12, 2016 and January 25, 2017 and to authorize future Extra Work Authorization not to exceed 10% of the current approved contract

There was no public comment on this item.

Fire Chief Charles Moore stated Agenda Item 5C included minor changes and referenced a handout of the changes, which was placed on file with the Clerk. Because the Commissioners had not reviewed the changes, Agenda Item 5C was pulled from the Consent Items.

On motion by Commissioner Berkbigler, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that the Consent Agenda Items 5A, 5B, and 5D be approved. Any and all Resolutions or Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Consent Agenda Items 5A, 5B, and 5D are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

17-021F **5C** Discussion and possible approval of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining the interpretation and applicability of Article's 42(F)(2) in the existing Collective Bargaining Agreement between Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District and Truckee Meadows Firefighters Association I.A.F.F. Local 3895 and authorize Fire Chief Charles Moore to execute said MOU.

David Watts-Vial, Legal Counsel, stated there had been a dispute over the meaning of a term and the process in place. Through a grievance resolution process, the parties came to an agreement with the language in the handout. He stated the issue was about making sure employees were subject to both State and the District's internal certification processes in order to receive payment. When asked by Commissioner Hartung about the exact percentage, Mr. Watts-Vial responded the firefighters argued they had a group of employees entitled to an additional 6 percent of their base pay while the District argued they were entitled to 3 percent. To resolve the grievance, it was decided the internal certification process would be required for the 6 percent. Additionally, a process was created to assist firefighters who had not passed the internal certification process, and those firefighters who did not pass would be entitled to only 3 percent. Chief Moore added it was only applicable to about five employees.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Berkbigler, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that the Consent Agenda Item 5C be approved. Any and all Resolutions or Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Consent Agenda Item 5C are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

17-022F **AGENDA ITEM 6** I.A.F.F. Local 3895 Report

John Sieben, representative from the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 3895, provided three updates. The Truckee Meadows Fire Association and Foundation raised almost \$3,000 for the victims of the Little Valley Fire with a pancake breakfast. He thanked the South Valley volunteers, the Truckee Meadows Community Paramedic and Firefighter Academy, and current and retired Truckee Meadows Firefighters. He promoted the 5th Annual Guns and Hoses Golf Tournament and hoped to bring their total amount raised to over \$100,000; the proceeds would go to The Children's Cancer Foundation. He announced 11 firefighters had returned from Firehouse World, a conference in San Diego, where they learned the latest techniques and received training.

There was no public comment or action on this item.

17-023F **AGENDA ITEM 7** Discussion and direction to staff regarding 2017 Nevada Legislative Session and other legislative issues proposed by legislators, or by other entities permitted by the Nevada State Legislature to submit bill draft requests, or such legislative issues as may be deemed by the Chair or the Board to be of critical significance to Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District to include, but not limited to, supporting Senate Bill 60 (SB,60) which revises provisions governing Medicaid payments for ground emergency medical transportation, and Senate Bill 67 (SB67), which revises certain provision related to fire safety requirements, and authorize the Fire Chief to testify if deemed necessary.

Fire Chief Charles Moore explained Senate Bill 60 (SB60) related to fire departments transporting Medicaid patients to a hospital. He indicated the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection Department (TMFPD) transported three patients on behalf of the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA). He stated that, although the opportunity would be rare, the bill would allow them to charge costs greater than Medicare's base reimbursement amount. He stated SB67 was a bill about fire sprinklers that applied mainly to southern Nevada but he noted he would support it if asked. He distributed a handout regarding SB128 that was place on file with the Clerk and explained the bill would give a Board of County Commissioners the option to not fund the County Fire Department. He stated the bill had not been to committee nor had there been any testimony on it. He recommended the Board allow him to testify on SB60, SB67, and monitor SB128 for any impacts to the District.

Chair Lucey asked Commissioner Berkbigler if, in her capacity as legislative liaison, any of those bills had been heard by committee, to which she and Chief Moore replied they had not. When asked by Chair Lucey if the Board could wait to take a position on those bills, Chief Moore said certainly. Commissioner Berkbigler opined there was no reason not to take a position on the bills if they were supportive, but if the bills changed, the Board would need to discuss further.

On motion by Commissioner Berkgigler, second by Commissioner Jung, it was ordered to support SB 60 and SB 67 in the forms presented to the Board, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote.

There was no public comment on this item.

Commission Hartung inquired about AB32, the bill about using minimal pesticides without having a license, saying it would affect the Fire District. Chief Moore said he had not been following it but stated it was their practice to call an exterminator for any pest infestations. He added they had a company on a maintenance contract to periodically spray and trap insects. Chief Moore stated Commissioner Hartung's scenario of spraying turnouts for bedbugs would be applicable to the bill and that bedbugs could be a potential problem. Chair Lucey directed Chief Moore to follow AB32.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT

17-024F **8A** Discussion and possible Direction on the Fire Chief Report to include the following related to fire district operations: Volunteer Census and Program Status; Succession Planning; Verdi Fire Protection Water.

Fire Chief Charles Moore spoke about a conversation he had with Dean Dow, President of the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA), who mentioned he was looking for more fixed base outside the downtown Reno area. Mr. Dow considered having an ambulance next to Station 17. Chief Moore supported the idea and intended to further study the topic so it could be presented to the Board. They also discussed a fixed base in Verdi at volunteer Station 351 that Chief Moore had been considering rehabbing or rebuilding due to its lack of amenities. He expressed Mr. Dow was interested in co-developing another station to base an ambulance in Verdi, though that could be a two or three year solution.

Chief Moore mentioned there were 64 volunteers with seven additional people in their reservist program but stated it was difficult to recruit new volunteers. He estimated less than 10 percent of people interested in volunteering actually completed the programs to become full volunteers. He announced they had staffed four volunteers in Verdi, three in Lemmon Valley, and others in the South Valleys. He said the reason many people fell away during the volunteer transition was because they could not pass the physical. He claimed the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training was only about 80 hours but that the structural firefighting training could take 260 hours and most volunteer firefighters never got on the hose line because career staff would typically arrive first. He concluded it was difficult to get people to dedicate such time when they would rarely use those skills. He stressed volunteers would be needed for three things: to deliver water tenders and air trucks, to provide rehabilitation, and to participate in wildland incidents.

Chief Moore addressed a news story about the volunteer recognition event and the criticism of the cost for it, but based on the positive feedback he received he felt

it was money well spent. He debunked a story about volunteers being required to return gift cards that Commissioner Hartung had donated. He announced another volunteer recruitment in the spring and hoped for an operational volunteer force of 50 individuals and a support force of 50 people. He commended the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) volunteers for their dedication during the flood event.

Commissioner Hartung asked if volunteers in Wadsworth were tracked and Chief Moore said they were not tracked because they were volunteers of the Paiute Tribe and not of the TMFPD. When asked by Mr. Hartung if volunteers received anything for completing 260 hours of training, Chief Moore said they did not. Commissioner Berkbigler asked of the eight volunteers in Verdi how many actually lived in Verdi, to which Chief Moore replied one or two. He mentioned predictable events like flooding and wind advisories were easier to respond to, though he admitted it could take them a while to arrive. Commissioner Berkbigler expressed concern over volunteers living far from their station. Chief Moore had asked Verdi residents if they would volunteer and four people raised their hands; he needed them to drive water tenders. He added the training for that was less but they would need to pass a physical and have the proper motor vehicle endorsements.

Chair Lucey noted the majority of the 70 volunteers provided service in the North Valleys while another large portion served the South Valleys. He pointed out many paid firefighters began as volunteers and felt it was a great place to start. He wanted the Board to continue their support of the volunteers in the South and North Valleys because of their community outreach. He stated all 19 volunteers in the South Valleys lived there and assumed the same could be said for the North Valleys; he called Verdi an anomaly in that respect. He sought to support those volunteers but made it clear they would need to adhere to certain standards and maintain the equipment given to them. He referenced the October 13th recruitment in the report, saying 50 people contacted them with interest, less than half attended, less than 1/10th applied, and none transitioned into being a volunteer. He questioned whether there was something wrong with the orientation or if there was a changing dynamic about volunteerism.

Commissioner Jung requested the Chief's report be redone in a dashboard style with different colors to make the various tasks easier to discern. She asked if the recruitment efforts included several tactics: targeting fire science classes, asking professors to encourage students, or putting up flyers at colleges. She encouraged the District to work with Human Resources (HR) to set up booths at job fairs because she felt young people were the target audience for volunteers. She noted one problem with volunteers was they were not professionalized which could put people in danger. She suggested working with Nancy Leuenhagen, Communications Director, and her staff to reach that target audience. She advocated visiting fire safety and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) classes at Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) to emphasize the career benefits of volunteering. Chief Moore mentioned they had attended the North Valley High School career fair and had about a dozen students who were interested. Commissioner Jung urged Chief Moore to send young firefighters to those events.

Commissioner Hartung suggested offering small stipends when volunteers completed the training and for completing additional trainings. He noted they did something similar with the Planning Commission and the Board of Adjustment. Chief Moore stressed, though recruitment numbers were down, productivity was up. He hoped to build up the roster of volunteers with enthusiastic people and projected it could be a two-year project to do so. Chair Lucey asked to look at the budget to see if there were tax dollars available to offer stipends to volunteers.

Chief Moore remarked the succession planning had stalled due to the reorganization of his management staff, but he stated they were planning on hiring a Deputy Chief and a Division Chief of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Training. He said they were considering a captain's academy since good captains made good battalion chiefs and eventually good fire chiefs. He expected his management staff vacancies to be filled by May and referenced a chart illustrating the proposed structure of the department. Chair Lucey asked if Chief Moore was recruiting for the Deputy Chief position or if he was planning to hire from within. Chief Moore replied they had recruited for one month and received 37 applications for Deputy Chief and 21 for Division Chief of EMS. They hired Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) to review the applicants, who had narrowed the pool down to 12-16 good candidates for Deputy Chief and 10 for Division Chief of EMS. This would be further narrowed down to a finalist pool from which they would fill the two positions; he expected it to be completed by the end of April 2017. Upon question by Chair Lucey, Chief Moore responded the Fire Officer for Strategic and Volunteers responsibilities would be handled by the new EMS Chief. He anticipated having members of the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 3895 be involved in the interview process for the two positions and welcomed the Commission to weigh in as well. Commissioner Jung advised Commissioners should not be giving hiring input because they did not have the necessary expertise.

Chief Moore spoke about the Verdi fire and recalled in March of 2012 the City of Reno cancelled mutual aid agreements with the Sierra Fire Protection District (SFPD) and the TMFPD, leaving Washoe County to protect the area between Caughlin Ranch and Verdi. The only station that could protect both areas was dilapidated and the County didn't own the land so they built Station 35 in Mogul. The response time of that station during the Verdi fire was just more than 8 minutes. He stated the four things needed to put out a fire were firefighters, tools and equipment, access to the fire, and water. In the Verdi fire, they could only bring in 750 gallons of water on the truck and 3,000 gallons on a tanker from Station 351. He showed an overhead graphic of the home that caught fire. He alleged at the time of the 911 call the house was already 50 percent on fire. He said in rural areas the typical process was to bring water where there was not access to fire hydrants. The day of the Verdi fire was a red flag day, it was 97 degrees, the house was substantially on fire on arrival, and there were other buildings nearby that had to be protected from spreading fire. He admitted it took a while to get additional water tenders and establish a water supply from a canal half a mile away. He said the Incident Commander had to determine how much water to use on the structure and how

much to conserve to protect nearby structures. He agreed with the Commander's choice to conserve water to protect the surrounding neighborhood.

Chief Moore questioned how to develop more water resources in rural areas, which comprised 25 percent of their coverage zone. He contended the expected service levels in rural, suburban, and urban areas would need to be different given the availability of resources like fire hydrants. When asked by Commissioner Hartung if the home that suffered the fire was on a well, Chief Moore assumed it was. He showed a map on the overhead projector of the area's fire hydrant locations and reported roughly half the homes in Verdi had close access to fire hydrants. He stated the presumption was Reno would ultimately end up annexing much of Verdi and that might be when municipal water infrastructure would be built. Due to the cost of trenching, he estimated bringing in a water supply would cost roughly a million dollars per mile. He distributed a rural water supply study, which was placed on file with the Clerk. Commissioner Hartung questioned if there was a way to hook up firefighting equipment to a domestic well and Chief Moore replied a well would not produce enough water.

Chief Moore reviewed the study that outlined water options. He highlighted a recommendation for additional water tenders and declared his disapproval of the water tender on which the Verdi Volunteer's Association insisted because only three people in the department that were qualified to drive it. If the agenda item was approved, they would replace that water tender by the end of the month. He also desired to have additional water tenders added to South Valley if they could find people to drive them, which would increase the water brought to an initial response to 8,000 gallons. He advocated for a community cistern that could be prefilled to hold around 50,000 gallons of water, though he questioned if would be funded by the TMFPD, citizens, grants, or some combination thereof. He speculated each cistern could cost \$200,000 each.

Commissioner Berkbigler asked if the firefighters that served several different stations could be stationed at Station 35, to which the Chief replied it was an option. He replied to her query about the closest fire station to Verdi saying Station 11 was the closest but did not have great access to the interstate, and that Station 19 did not have firefighting capability. Station 10 was next closest but did not appear on the map; Station 35 was far but had close access to the highway. Chief Moore located the burned Verdi house on the map.

Commissioner Herman expressed concern about the immediate problems and stated building cisterns would take time. She suggested utilizing contractors to drive trucks with additional water. Mark Foree, General Manager of Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA), had told her development would continue in the area and she added it would be beneficial to have more water tenders. Commissioner Jung inquired if a fourth person could be added to a nearby station just to drive the water truck. Chief Moore0 replied it had been discussed to add another firefighter to Station 15 in Sun Valley and that they would use forthcoming data software to run an analysis of the pros and cons of putting an extra person there.

Commissioner Jung cautioned issues like fire hydrants and water ingress needed to be addressed during planning and development stages. She felt the County should not be in the business of residential development especially since many areas ended up being annexed. Chief Moore touted the department's frequent success at extinguishing structure fires when there were no hydrants nearby. He alleged this particular fire was difficult because of how widespread it was when they arrived; having more water tenders may not have helped. He stated a home equipped with fire sprinklers would not have seen as big a loss as that house. The ideal water supply would be municipal water, followed by water tenders, then cisterns. Commissioner Jung claimed it would be too onerous to require owners to install sprinkler systems but suggested it could be a prerequisite for new construction to have them. Chief Moore agreed it would be very expensive.

When asked by Commissioner Berkbigler about the cause of the fire, Chief Moore relayed the Sparks Fire Marshall's conclusion that it was started by oily rags left on the deck and it spread because of a fresh coat of linseed oil. Chair Lucey urged Chief Moore to place a fourth member at station 35 and to have a water tender available as temporary solutions.

On the call for public comment, Jim Sievers, Verdi resident, stated he was happy to hear some of the concerns that had been voiced were being acted upon. He said there was no guideline that mutual aid should only be called for severe emergencies and asked why mutual aid was not called in this instance. He alleged a single company could not provide enough coverage. He said Verdi once had 25 volunteers signed up but that number had dropped to 6 people, and the only one who could drive a water tender lived in Gerlach. He reiterated the need to staff either station 351 or 35 with a firefighter who could drive a water truck. He indicated interest rates were going up for Verdi residents yet he said fire crews were not aware of water sources in Verdi.

Frank Gonthier, resident of Verdi for 15 years, read a letter by Addie Argyris, which was placed on file with the Clerk.

Gary Cushman, Verdi resident, remarked the first people on the scene when his house had had a gas leak were volunteers, followed by the TMFPD 5-7 minutes later and NV Energy arrived 15 minutes after the TMFPD. He stressed volunteers could give updates to the fire department. He claimed water was available, citing a neighbor's swimming pool, but management did not know where it was. He added he tried to get an application to be a volunteer from the website but never received one.

Roger Puccinelli, the owner of the house that burned, said the water the fire department used came from half a mile away, but the Truckee River was only feet away and there was water in the swimming pool next door. He disagreed with the District's assertion of how much of his house was on fire; he alleged it was only the deck and the garage. When he suggested using the river water to the firefighter, he was told they did not have a pump. He stated proper equipment needed to be ordered.

Rich Loverde, architect and general contractor, spoke as a five-term member of the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District. He commented the solutions presented at various fire department meetings were not viable without funding, land acquisition, additional employees, and equipment. He requested a documented plan outlining response time, equipment, manpower, and identified water sources. He asserted if it had been windy that day, most of Verdi would have been burned.

Pam McNeil, member of the Ward Five Neighborhood Advisory Board (NAB), stated she understood the needs of both a county and a city. She stated the lengthy training process was a perfect solution but warned waiting for the perfect solution could hinder short-term fixes. She suggested many people did not know where to go during that fire but even without extensive training locals could have helped. She agreed with the ideas of offering stipends for volunteers and staffing the fire station with an extra person.

Carly Borchard, was heartened by the discussion and said the community was very invested in those issues. She handed in a petition signed by several hundred residents, which was placed on file with the Clerk.

17-025F **8B** Career Statistics and Report for November and December 2016.

Chief Moore had nothing additional to add on this topic.

17-026F **8C** Volunteer Statistics and Report for October, November and December 2016.

Chief Moore had nothing additional to add on this topic.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Items 8A through 8C be accepted.

17-027F **AGENDA ITEM 9** Discussion and possible approval, acceptance and ratification of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan developed by the Arrowcreek Home Owners Association.

Fire Chief Charles Moore called the plan to outline a strategy for wildland fire mitigation critical and applauded the authors. He urged the Board to ratify it. Commissioner Berkgigler commended the plan, saying it had applicability in other areas.

On the call for public comment, Kathi Delegal thanked the Board for ratifying the plan and was pleased they would consider using it as a model. She declared three entities were jointly applying for a grant through the Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) which would target 178 acres.

Commissioner Jung suggested there was the potential for the plan's designers to help other organizations such as the Verdi Bucket Brigade and encouraged

the two groups to talk. Chair Lucey praised Ms. Delegal's experience in grant writing and her local government background.

On motion by Commissioner Berkbigler, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 9 be accepted and ratified.

When asked by Chair Lucey to have Agenda Items 10 and 11 be carried out in a block vote, Chief Moore indicated Agenda Item 11 would be pulled.

17-028F **AGENDA ITEM 10** Approve the purchase of two (2) new All Poly 2000 Gallon Tanker Pumpers from Midwest Fire, 901 Commerce Road, Luverne, Minnesota in the amount of \$437,904 using the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) cooperating purchasing program.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Harung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 10 be approved.

17-029F **AGENDA ITEM 12** Possible Closed Session for the purpose of discussing labor issues with Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District per NRS 288.220.

There was no closed session.

17-030F **AGENDA ITEM 13** 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 comments.

17-031F **AGENDA ITEM 14** Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

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10:33 p.m. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

BOB LUCEY, Chair
Truckee Meadows Fire
Protection District

ATTEST:

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

*Minutes Prepared By:
Derek Sonderfan, Deputy County Clerk*