

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

TUESDAY

9:00 a.m.

DECEMBER 5, 2017

PRESENT:

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

Jan Galassini, Chief Deputy County Clerk
Charles Moore, Fire Chief
David Watts-Vial, Deputy District Attorney

ABSENT:

Bob Lucey, Chair

The Board convened at 9:01 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:

17-163F **AGENDA ITEM 3** Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

17-164F **AGENDA ITEM 4** Announcements/Reports.

Commissioner Hartung stated there were no codes regarding Airbnb residences, an assertion Vice Chair Berkbigler confirmed. He felt the topic needed further exploration. When asked by Vice Chair Berkbigler which governing body should accomplish this, Deputy District Attorney David Watts-Vial responded the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Board could address fire issues and the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) could address other safety issues. Commissioner Hartung stated there were a substantial number of people who rented out their homes during special events. Vice Chair Berkbigler asked Commissioner Hartung to request that item for a future TMFPD agenda and she suggested he make the same request at the next BCC meeting.

Commissioner Herman stated Waste Management (WM) should help pay for the TMFPD's green waste program since the District was assuming some of WM's duties. Mr. Watts-Vial said he could not comment without first reviewing the WM contract; he would look at it and get back to the Board.

There was no public comment on this item.

CONSENT ITEMS – 5A and 5B

17-165F **5A** Approval of minutes from the October 17, 2017 meeting.

17-166F **5B** Discussion and possible approval of a revised Mutual Aid Agreement between Secretary of the Air Force acting by and through the Commander, Nevada Air National Guard pursuant to the authority of 42 U.S.C. § 1856a and the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried with Chair Lucey absent, it was ordered that the Consent Agenda Items 5A and 5B be approved.

17-167F **AGENDA ITEM 6** I.A.F.F. Local 3895 Report

Ian Satterfield, President of the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 3895, stated they held a blackjack tournament at the Paramedic Refresher and raised over \$4,700 for the Northern Nevada Children’s Cancer Foundation.

Mr. Satterfield called the topic of dispatch a difficult adaptive challenge. He stated the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) dispatch system was inefficient and ineffective but added that dispatchers did an exceptional job. He explained Reno 911 took all initial calls and gathered information. Reno 911 then redirected the calls to the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) dispatcher. The calls were then transferred to the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority’s (REMSA) dispatch to continue the emergency medical dispatch process. He pointed out mistakes could be made when so many people were involved.

Mr. Satterfield told three stories of dispatch challenges he personally experienced as a TMFPD captain, one where he arrived on the scene at the same time the call was cancelled, one where he was given misinformation about the nature of the distress, and one where REMSA arrived after the call had been cancelled. He referenced a report done in 2012 that stated fixing dispatch issues needed to be a top priority though he doubted it had been. The report recommended all 911 dispatch units be combined in a central county-wide resource with single methodology as well as implementing an automatic vehicle locator (AVL) program. Additionally it suggested all EMS communications be on the same radio system, which REMSA was not currently on. He said the function of public safety could be improved by the integration of data and communication systems. He commented it was time to work on the adaptive challenge which was more than just a technical fix. He noted a Blue Ribbon Committee report from 2014 also recommended a centralized dispatch center.

Mr. Satterfield congratulated the new TMFPD employees and those who received promotions. He looked forward to working with the new Deputy Fire Chief and praised TMFPD Fire Chief Charles Moore for the work he had done over the prior eight months.

Mr. Satterfield did not have an answer to Commissioner Herman's query about the cost of bringing REMSA up to standard. Vice Chair Berkbigler revealed her top priority in the upcoming year was dispatch and indicated the issues were being addressed.

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

17-168F **AGENDA ITEM 7** Presentation of new employees, and promotional announcements

New Employees:

- Shane Bohach, Firefighter Paramedic
- Tyler Ewald, Firefighter Paramedic
- Derek Jackson, Firefighter Paramedic
- Alex Rodriguez, Firefighter Paramedic
- Ryan Rutter, Firefighter Paramedic
- Anthony Schiro, Firefighter Paramedic

Promoted Employees Badge Pinning

- Josh Kutz, Fire Captain
- Ryan Whitlock, Fire Captain

New Employee Badge Pinning

- Timothy Collins, Fire Mechanic
- Brett Lee, Fire Prevention Specialist

Fire Chief Charles Moore mentioned Josh Kutz would be receiving his pin by his mother, Laura, and Ryan Whitlock would be pinned by his brother, Cory. Timothy Collins would be pinned by his wife, Michelle, and Brett Lee would be pinned by wife Sylvia.

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

17-169F **AGENDA ITEM 8** A. Discussion and possible direction to staff on the Fire Chief Report to include operational matters and activities for the months of October and November 2017:

1. Green Waste Program Update
 2. Nevada Donor Network 2017 Partner of the year –TMFPD
 3. Nevada Donor Network 2017 Champion of the Year – Captain Chris Black
 4. Facility Projects Update
- B. Career Statistics and Report for August 2017
C. Volunteer Statistics and Report for August 2017

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore announced the green waste program was an overwhelming success, having collected 245 tons of waste the second weekend of the program. He indicated they were still trying to masticate and recycle the material collected. He stated he had not seen a project in his career that received as much praise from citizens and noted each of the four sites was nearly at capacity. He remarked they used a masticator, a chipper, and a burn box; the resulting treated chips would be available to the public. Leaves and other small debris were taken to RT Donovan Co. Inc. for recycling.

Chief Moore stated they collected almost 500 tons of debris over two weekends, equivalent to 500 acres of defensible space. He praised his staff, especially Battalion Chief Michael Heikka, and the volunteers at Stations 221 and 223. He planned to bring the program back on a later agenda to decide which resources to allocate to it. He stated encouraging defensible space was a key component to a fire-safe community.

Chief Moore announced the TMFPD and Captain Chris Black were recognized by the Nevada Donor Network and he praised Captain Black for his partnership with the Network. He noted many staff members attended a dinner hosted by the Network and said the District was proud to be a part of the program.

Regarding Commissioner Hartung's prior request for an update on facility projects, Chief Moore stated the District needed to start a master plan which would assess each station's condition and its need for short and long-term improvements. Additionally they would review whether the stations were in the right places. He said the process could take three or four months. He mentioned discussions with the County about possibly adding a freestanding administration building in the complex. He indicated they currently rented space for fleet maintenance and suggested eventually taking that money and redirecting it toward debt service to renovate a building that would work for the District in the long-term. He listed some of the issues with District facilities that needed to be addressed and said he would return at a future meeting with an update.

Commissioner Hartung asked whether the Board could ask Chief Moore for details of a potential master plan or if they could provide specific direction. Deputy District Attorney David Watts-Vial replied they could ask the Chief to return with a plan that included specific provisions, provided the Board could take action on the item. Commissioner Hartung asked the Chief to return with a plan for the Board to review, including long-range plans related to the needs of the facilities ranked by priority. Chief Moore concluded by offering to answer any questions about the statistics provided in the Chief's report.

When asked by Commissioner Hartung about the green waste program, Chief Moore responded RT Donovan charged a fee of around \$150 per 30-yard dumpster. Chief Moore estimated the District would have delivered between 16 and 20 dumpsters by the end of the program. Chief Moore confirmed Commissioner Hartung's assumption that the District was chipping waste before delivering it to RT Donovan. He explained the District considered traveling to sites with equipment on a case by case basis, as well as

picking up people's waste. He noted they could consider charging fees in the future for those services. Commissioner Hartung suggested they could ask for donations for those services. In addition he praised everyone involved with the Nevada Donor Network and told a personal story about his daughter's need for a donor.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried with Chair Lucey absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 8 be acknowledged.

17-170F **AGENDA ITEM 9** Discussion and possible approval of an Employment Agreement for Scott M. Gorgon to include salary and benefits for the position of Fire Deputy Chief of Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District and authorize the Chairman to sign the same.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore said if the motion was approved, he would introduce the Deputy Chief.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried with Chair Lucey absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 9 be approved and authorized.

Chief Moore said it was an exhaustive process to find the right person for the position and he introduced Scott Gorgon. Mr. Gorgon stated he was excited to start a new chapter in his life, noting he was originally from Carson City. He looked forward to working with the District and speaking with the Commissioners individually.

17-171F **AGENDA ITEM 10** Approve the 2018 Health Benefits Program for District employees, dependents and retirees at an estimated annual cost of \$1,579,206 and authorize the Chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners to execute all insurance contracts and service agreements pertinent to the Health Benefits Program.

Cindy Vance, Chief Fiscal Officer for the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD), said the District met with LP Insurance regarding renewing their health insurance. LP Insurance presented them with options to stay with Hometown Health (HH) and to change providers. She noted at first the District was presented with a 27 percent increase to stay with HH but LP Insurance negotiated that to 21 percent. Switching to United Health would result in a smaller increase but after discussions with employee unions, it was determined to stay with HH so nobody's insurance would be interrupted. She indicated the renewal option included dental benefits from Guardian at a 9 percent increase and vision benefits at no increase. She added they were renewing the

employee assistance program. The total insurance package cost was \$1,579,206, which was within their budgeted amount. She recommended the Board accept the proposal.

Commissioner Jung asked why the TMFPD did not partner with the County, to which Ms. Vance replied they met with the County's Human Resources department and the District was interested in considering it for the following year. Ms. Vance noted the insurance covered approximately 130 full-time employees. She stated she was not aware how the 21 percent increase compared to what the County was experiencing and explained the high costs were due to the small size of the District.

Commissioner Jung requested the idea of joining with the County be placed on a future agenda and noted in the past they considered a 9 percent increase to be too much. Deputy District Attorney David Watts-Vial indicated the TMFPD had not joined with the County because that would have to be negotiated into each contract with the labor associations. He added it could be explored in the next round of negotiations but he was unsure if it had been broached with the associations. He said they would begin negotiations with International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) Local 3895 in February of 2018. As the contract was currently written, both sides needed to agree to a health plan. He said everyone was aware of increased healthcare costs and ideas had been suggested regarding how to decrease those costs. One possible solution could be for the District to join on the County's plan. When asked why the idea had not yet been offered, Chief Moore responded the consensus was the employees were satisfied with the plan. Commissioner Jung pointed out the employees did not pay for the plan. Chief Moore agreed it was unsustainable and he wanted to discuss this with the associations.

Commissioner Jung gave direction that combining the TMFPD with the County as well as alternate solutions needed to be a part of negotiations as a way to make healthcare costs sustainable. Prompted by Commissioner Hartung's query, Chief Moore responded the insurance contract was month-to-month and they could decide to come back into the County at any time. He added they would begin negotiations soon and the District would speak to its employees. Commissioner Hartung echoed the need for the solution to be sustainable. Chief Moore noted a number of shock claims filed in the District could have been a contributing factor to the cost increase.

On the call for public comment, Mr. Tim Leighton pointed out there were no retirees among the members who evaluated healthcare bids. He stated with the increases it could cost a retiree between \$11,440 and \$18,303 to pay for health insurance. He asked why there were no other options for retirees such as a high deductible plan. He stated some retirees were spending a third of their income on health insurance. He encouraged the Board to have the TMFPD join with the County's insurance plan or at least offer alternatives.

Commissioner Jung agreed a retiree should be appointed to the decision-making committee to ensure their input was considered. She requested the TMFPD return with more information. Vice Chair Berkbigler stated when the County was looking to renegotiate two years before, they faced a 24 to 27 percent increase though it ended up

being smaller. She pointed out rising healthcare costs were seen across the nation and she hoped the reprieve for health insurance in Nevada would positively impact everyone.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion duly carried with Chair Lucey absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 10 be approved and authorized with the direction provided above.

17-172F **AGENDA ITEM 11** Authorization to freeze one (1) vacant Fire Mechanic/Logistics Assistant position (#70009601) and to create one (1) additional Fire Mechanic position.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore stated the District felt it was better served freezing the logistics position and having three mechanics on staff to service engines. He answered Commissioner Hartung's question by saying the mechanic position was in addition to the one filled earlier in the meeting.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried with Chair Lucey absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 11 be authorized.

17-173F **AGENDA ITEM 12** Discussion, acceptance and possible direction to staff regarding an "Informational Summary/Finding and Recommendations" report on Lakeview Incident #TM160005937 presented by Mike Brown of R&R Partners.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore stated there was a structure fire in August 2016 and there had been substantial discussion on the item. He originally hired Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) to perform a study but he felt it was not comprehensive enough. Throughout his presentation he read the following summaries, findings and recommendations from the informational summary provided with the staff report: Dispatch; District 35 Engine 35 Response; Actions of Engine 35 Personnel; Water Source; Agreements; and Volunteers.

Mr. Brown noted the time from call to dispatch was less than 60 seconds in accordance with an agreement between the TMFPD and the County. He indicated the District still had to handle other incidents while addressing the Lakeview fire, which it performed in an acceptable manner. He added dispatchers were often overlooked in incidents like these but there was room for improvement.

Mr. Brown indicated a study of the cover response system by the TMFPD and other fire departments was performed several years before. At that time it was advised the time between receipt of a call to the time on scene should not exceed ten minutes, which was achieved in this incident. Mr. Brown stated the pictures provided of the garage gave a good description of what the personnel of engine 35 saw upon arrival.

Mr. Brown noted most engines in the area, including engine 35, only carried 750 gallons of water. He acknowledged it took a long time to establish a water supply even with the assistance of many people on the scene. He announced when he visited Station 35 to interview the personnel, there was a water tender on site, which was one of the recommendations made in the report. He tried to fashion the future recommendations regarding water supply to be applicable to the entire area of District responsibility, not just Verdi.

In response to prior comments about swimming pools being available during the Lakeview incident, Mr. Brown remarked without pre-planning the ability for personnel to utilize them was difficult. He acknowledged the frustration caused by this and stressed that it should be examined. He noted the rapid growth in certain areas could allow public service agencies to use new water sources for all areas. He indicated that could become important in the future if wells started to dry up.

Mr. Brown mentioned the TMFPD had agreements with the Lake Tahoe Regional Fire Chief, several with California, and some with partnering agencies, all of which were revisited annually and modified as needed. He stated the Nevada Network of Fire Adaptive Communities was a program that took the place of the Nevada Fire Safe Council and it had 170 chapters throughout the state. He recommended they establish chapters in Verdi as well as other areas in the TMFPD's jurisdiction to assist in obtaining grants and working with residents to create fire adaptive communities.

Mr. Brown stated Chief Moore had done extensive work throughout the entire district but it was an overwhelming task. He cited this as the reason for a liaison position. He commented volunteer recruitment was a problem not only in northern Nevada but it was a problem nationwide.

Mr. Brown noted he spent several months meeting with the community and exploring options. He pointed out many positive steps had already been taken and there had been good conversations about water delivery. A recent County overview of responsibilities addressed many of the comments found in the report. He stressed he did not realize how much growth was happening in Verdi and added several commercial buildings in the area had water supplies that could be utilized.

When asked by Commissioner Hartung whether there was anything the TMFPD could have done to save the house, Mr. Brown replied because the fire started outside the property owners' fire detection system, the fire was already well underway by the time the first engines arrived. In short, they did all they could given the amount of time from the start of the fire to their arrival. Commissioner Hartung indicated one of the reasons he chose his house was its proximity to a fire hydrant and told a personal story about a fire at his house.

Commissioner Herman said she felt responsible for not being aware of the lack of water and other flaws in the system. She said she was working with Chief Moore on ways to use water from the Truckee River and said she wanted to hear from the public.

Commissioner Jung thanked Mr. Brown for the comprehensiveness of the report and the community risk assessment results. She agreed with the report's recommendations of visiting communities, creating an action plan, creating a liaison position, and educating the public. She asked why an automatic vehicle locator (AVL) program had not yet been implemented. Mr. Brown responded dispatch issues should be at the top of the District's priority list and stated given what was at stake it could absorb and justify the cost. After a brief discussion, Chief Moore stated all fire agencies had the AVL technology to see all available fire units, but there needed to be an agreement between the agencies to utilize the technology. There were also technical challenges between the TMFPD and the City of Sparks because they used different dispatch centers. He remarked it could be quick to implement AVL but it would require agreements and overcoming hurdles between the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA) and the City of Sparks. He added there was no reason the TMFPD and the City of Reno could not have AVL since they shared the same dispatch location.

Commissioner Jung stressed the importance of the issue and said they could use the Board of Health to make it happen. She suggested the Regional Planning Governing Board should be more involved in negotiating with developers to establish water supply. Additionally she suggested working with developers who planned to develop in areas that required volunteer stations to put money or land toward bringing those stations up to code. She mentioned marijuana retail companies often asked her what the community needed. The District could ask them to pay money to fund the fire system, new fire stations, or the liaison position mentioned in the report. She offered to work with Chief Moore to cultivate those relationships. She felt the Truckee Meadows Water Authority should pay for the maintenance of County fire hydrants like they did for the cities of Reno and Sparks.

Vice Chair Berkgigler noted some of the recommendations in the report had already been put in place. She hoped the District would act positively on each point in the report and emphasized the importance of AVL and dispatch, issues that protected both citizens and firefighters.

Commissioner Hartung said wildland protection was a valid argument for pushing developers to include fire hydrants in outlying areas. When asked about the different couplers used by agencies, Mr. Brown responded districts that used different fittings supplied them to all agencies for automatic aid responses. Commissioner Hartung said cisterns would be the responsibility of the people who chose to live in outlying areas and noted he accepted the challenges of living away from many services and infrastructure. He suggested creating a Special Assessment District so people in one area did not pay for fire service in other areas. Vice Chair Berkgigler mentioned developers who proposed development in the footprint of Reno had to account for municipal water

and hydrants. That was not the case in outlying areas and she agreed taxpayers throughout the County should not have to pay for facilities for residents in other areas.

Commissioner Hartung echoed Mr. Brown's recommendation to identify available water sources like pools and ponds, especially in places without fire hydrants. Chief Moore admitted there was abundant water in Verdi but there were issues with getting water from a static source to the fire. He mentioned they used 3,000 feet of hose to battle the Lakeview fire and the issue of getting water to the fire would have existed even with additional cisterns. He added hydrants, water, and access were the technology the TMFPD had to rely on. Commissioner Hartung cautioned he did not want to force residents in outlying areas to have cisterns; there was a balance to be found.

Commissioner Herman noted rural citizens paid taxes for fire protection. Commissioner Hartung stated the hydrants in his area were paid for by the developer and that cost was reflected in an increased purchase price for homes. Vice Chair Berkbigler added there were many factors and she asked Chief Moore to consider all of them. She requested an update on the process as part of a future chief's report.

On the call for public comment, Mr. Tim Leighton commended Mr. Brown for the report but said it omitted the idea of regionalization. He stated engine 15 was the second to arrive on the scene. Since each truck carried 1,000 feet of hose, if one more truck arrived they could have had a water supply within fifteen minutes, not over an hour. He predicted this type of thing would continue to happen. He alleged the City of Reno would be supplementing fire service to the TMFPD if they agreed to boundary drops.

Ms. Carly Borchard emphasized the Verdi community had been requesting a business plan but she felt there was no plan. She stated there was a water tank in downtown Verdi that trucks could utilize if they spoke to the owner. She appreciated the analysis but wanted a plan in place, not just discussion.

Mr. Tom Dunn, Vice President of the Reno Fire Fighters Association and District Vice President for the Professional Firefighters of Nevada, stated he was speaking as a taxpayer and resident. He recalled speaking at a prior meeting and saying in order to be successful in automatic and mutual aid situations there needed to be joint policies and procedures on many issues. He noted those as well as joint training had not yet occurred. He indicated numerous studies had been performed about where to put fire stations but policy makers had not addressed that issue. He pointed out the City of Reno had seven fire stations closer to the Lakewood fire than the ones from which the TMFPD dispatched trucks. He asked why it took 45 minutes to request mutual aid from Reno.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion duly carried with Chair Lucey absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 12 be accepted with additional direction for Chief Moore to devise a region-wide plan, taking into account joint training.

17-174F **AGENDA ITEM 13** Announcements/Reports.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore announced there would be a meeting on December 19 and it would include an update on the progress made with the City of Sparks on automatic aid enhancement. He noted there were technological setbacks but he hoped to have a system in place by February. He listed several incidents where the TMFPD was not called despite being the closest agency and stressed the importance of using automatic vehicle locator (AVL) technology.

Vice Chair Berkbigler acknowledged houses burning down was an unfortunate part of living in the area. She indicated the issues between the different fire agencies were two-sided and she praised the firefighters in the room. She emphasized it was the Board’s job, not the firefighters’ job, to negotiate deals. She mentioned firefighters did not care what jurisdiction a fire was in, it was their job to put it out. She said it was incumbent on all elected officials to work with the fire chiefs to fix the issues.

17-175F **AGENDA ITEM 14** Public Comment.

Mr. Tom Dunn, a member of the City of Reno Employee Advisory Insurance Committee, said Reno had the same problems as the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District regarding insurance for active members and retirees. He stated healthcare costs continued to increase and he claimed they were twice as high in northern Nevada as they were in Clark County. He questioned how to provide access to healthcare for employees, retirees, and residents when there were limited providers.

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10:54 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*