

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

TUESDAY

9:00 a.m.

JANUARY 16, 2018

PRESENT:

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

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

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:

18-003F **AGENDA ITEM 3** Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

18-004F **AGENDA ITEM 4** Announcements/Reports

Chief Moore stated Agenda Item 7 was pulled from the meeting.

CONSENT ITEMS 5A THROUGH 5C

18-005F **5A** Approval of minutes from the December 19, 2017 meeting.

18-006F **5B** Acceptance of the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District's Audited Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2017. (All Commission Districts.)

18-007F **5C** Accept a donation of ten (10) Complimentary Tasting Passes for Two from Wine Road, Sonoma Co. in support of the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District's service against the Sonoma County area fires and express appreciation for the thoughtful contribution. (All Commission Districts.)

Commissioner Jung acknowledged Agenda Item 5C, which was the donation of 10 wine tasting passes for the first responders who assisted in the fire suppression in Sonoma County.

There was no public comment on this item.

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

18-008F **AGENDA ITEM 6** I.A.F.F. Local 3895 Report.

There was no report provided from the I.A.F.F. Local 3895.

18-009F **AGENDA ITEM 8** Fire Chief Report

- A. Discussion and possible direction to staff on the to include operational matters and activities for the month of December 2017.
 - 1. Verdi Fire issues update.
 - 2. Update on Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention selection process.
 - 3. Summary of calls to Elder Care Facilities. (requested by Commissioner Hartung.)
 - 4. Update on AVL (Automatic Vehicle Location) Dispatch.
 - 5. TMWA request for relocation of South Hills pump station to new Station 14.
 - 6. Update on Station 14 appraisal and construction progress.
- B. Career Statistics and Report for October 2017.
- C. Volunteer Statistics and Report for October 2017.

Chief Moore said Agenda Item 8A1 was an update about the Verdi Fire issues. He provided a map and a memorandum from Dyer Engineering, which were distributed to the Commissioners and placed on file with the Clerk. He stated the two main concerns in Verdi were water supply and defensible space. He said he contacted Dyer Engineering to review the water system issues and they provided him with a memorandum as well as a scope of work for the development of a master plan. He stated during discussions it was suggested the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TWMA) install a water main closer to the area of concern. He explained the cost to provide water infrastructure to the community of Verdi would exceed \$5 million. He said part of the solution would be to extend the water main perhaps to Bridge Street or to the elementary school and to have a series of cisterns throughout the community. A study would be conducted for the next few months to determine the best processes. In the meantime, he asked his new Deputy Chief of Operations to survey the area and review the strategy and tactics and to develop some pre-plan information. He was concerned about vegetative growth in Verdi and noted the residents would be asked to create defensible space around their homes in the spring. He indicated there was sagebrush that stood more than eight feet tall that needed to be removed. He said they had the equipment to harvest and dispose of green waste and it would be utilized in the Verdi community.

Commissioner Hartung stated the TMWA would be meeting soon regarding the West Reno Water Company, which would eventually provide the water supply to Verdi. He said he did not know when it would be in place because it was part of the discussions which were still occurring. He indicated there had been talk of placing fire hydrants where the stems branched out from the water main.

Chief Moore referred to the map he provided and he explained how complex it would be to distribute water to Verdi. He stated the light colored areas depicted the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) and the pink colored areas were covered by the City of Reno. He stated it would be very difficult to extend water mains through all the streets. He said he heard it would cost approximately \$1 million per mile for water line work to be completed. He noted there were short-term and long-term plans being considered for the Verdi community.

Chair Berkbigler wondered if the City of Reno was required to install fire hydrants when an area was developed. Chief Moore replied developers were required to install hydrants and he understood the development that the City of Reno was currently working on would include a water line coming out of the Somersett community. There was a chance the water line could be extended into Verdi, but it would take a civil engineer to determine the most expeditious way to bring water to the area.

Chair Berkbigler asked where the area that the City of Reno was developing was located. Chief Moore said he understood the area was near the TM3507 section of the map he provided he explained there was a useable water line near Highway 40. He stated it was two to three miles from where water was essentially needed.

Chair Berkbigler asked if Chief Moore knew where the water would be coming from to protect the community when fire season started. Chief Moore replied the master plan would take about three months to develop and would have to include a complete water system with cisterns, water mains and operation components to shuttle water to needed areas. He said before the beginning of fire season he should know where the water would come from.

Chair Berkbigler asked where the water would come from for the cisterns. Chief Moore replied the cisterns could be filled from an attached well or could they be filled manually. He explained a cistern with a well attached to it would cost approximately \$50,000 each and the area might need 10 of them. He stated a cistern would provide 5,000 to 10,000 gallons of water which was enough to suppress a fire for the first 20 to 30 minutes while the crews determined if additional water resources were needed for total fire suppression.

Chief Moore said Agenda Item 8A2 was an update about the selection process for the new Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention position. He stated recruiter had been contracted to do a national search for the position. He said there were six high quality candidates and one candidate who stood out above the rest. He noted he would

contact the recruiter to establish negotiations with that candidate. He hoped he could make an announcement about the position soon.

Chief Moore said Agenda Item 8A3 was about the frequency of calls to the Cascades of the Sierra care facility. He provided a summary of calls, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He indicated in 2017 crews were dispatched to the elder care facility 365 times. He noted 1,990 calls for service occurred during the year and two out of ten calls represented the responses to the elder care facility. He thought it was necessary to have a discussion regarding the frequency of calls and the cost to send an engine to each call. He noted the elder care facility created a high call demand for Station 17.

Commissioner Hartung stated Station 17 was the second busiest station in the district and he wanted to see a rescue unit at the station to accommodate calls such as the calls to the elder care facility. He thought a rescue unit could respond to many of the emergency medical calls. He noted the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA) would respond to the medical calls also. He thought the savings could be substantial and it made more sense rather than sending a fire engine to each call.

Chief Moore stated he had been communicating with President and Chief Executive Officer of REMSA Dean Dow and Sparks Fire Department Chief Chris Maples regarding their similar issues. They all agreed dispatching fire engines or ambulances to low priority calls was not sustainable considering that call volumes continued to increase. He said one of the solutions they discussed was to send, for example, two paramedics in a Chevy Tahoe for those types of calls. He said that would allow Stations 15 and 17 along with the City of Sparks to respond to priority three calls more efficiently.

Commissioner Hartung said that was what he had referred to as “flex crews”. He thought this would create a positive economic result for responding to emergency calls. He said flex crews could relieve pressure of low priority calls for both the Sparks Fire Department and the TMFPD.

Chief Moore thought the City of Sparks had the same issues responding to low priority calls. He said some of the TMFPD’s fire engines were starting to wear out prematurely due to high call volumes for emergency services. He stated part of the solution was included in the dispatching process which he would address later in his report.

Chief Moore said Agenda Item 8A4 was an update regarding automatic vehicle location (AVL) dispatch. He said a strategic plan was developed by the Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board (EMSAB) and noted AVL was included in that strategic plan. He stated during the last EMSAB meeting he spoke about the need for AVL. He said Chief Maples, Mr. Dow and Reno Fire Department Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division Chief Dennis Nolan all agreed that AVL was needed in the region. He explained when high priority calls were dispatched the closest unit to the

emergency was not always being dispatched. He wanted to ensure this Board understood if they moved to AVL there could be an increased call volume that could affect County citizens. He thought all the partners would want to understand that as well. He did not believe the effects of the call volume would be substantial but it was important to know the possibilities. He said Preparedness and Emergency Medical Services Program Manager Christina Conti was conducting a study to gather data pertinent to call volumes for medical responses, but he wanted data regarding all types of calls if that was possible. He stated there would be some technological limitations even if the agencies all agreed to move to AVL. One of the main issues was there were four different dispatch centers, one each for REMSA, the Reno Fire Department, the Sparks Fire Department and the TMFPD. He noted it could take as much as five minutes to contact one center from another center to respond to a mutual aid call. He thought that would waste a lot of time and time was important when someone was in cardiac arrest or respiratory arrest. He indicated it would be a disservice to the County citizens not to provide AVL and a strong collaboration with the other partners. He said he would confer with Ms. Conti regarding the process of the study and the anticipated data. He stated the solution would not take a matter of months it would take years. He said the technology existed with the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Tiburon systems but the issue was not having a centralized dispatch center.

Chief Moore said Agenda Item 8A5 was regarding a request to TMWA for relocating the South Hills pump station to the new Station 14. He said TMWA contacted him and asked if it was possible for them to acquire some land within the new Station 14 development. He said TMWA was asking for a 100 foot by 100 foot plot of land and would pay for all costs associated with the pump station including the purchase or lease of the land site. He stated if the Board had no objections he would work with TMWA and bring options back to the Board.

Commissioner Hartung asked if fill stations were available to fill tenders. He thought it would be wise to have a fill station at Station 14. Chief Moore replied that was usually done from overhead fill valves except Station 17 had a raw water fill station. He noted there could be a source for water at the station inside the truck bay or they could connect to a hydrant.

Commissioner Hartung said he was hoping to negotiate a deal with TMWA. Chief Moore replied he had some ideas about how TMWA could help with the site. He said TMWA was open to ideas.

Chief Moore said Agenda Item 8A6 was an update about Station 14 regarding the appraisal and construction process. He stated an appraiser would provide the data on the value of the property where Station 14 was currently located. He spoke regarding Ken Krater who had the desire to purchase said property. He said he would inquire with the legal department to establish the guidelines to sell the property. He noted the certificate of occupancy should be ready for Station 14 by the middle of May. He said after the move to the new station they would have a discussion as to what to do with the existing site. He stated the existing site contained a modular building that could possibly

be dismantled and moved to Gerlach for crew quarters. He explained that would require a study to be conducted about the feasibility and costs of transporting the modular building. He was unsure about whether the truck bay would have to be removed from the property before the sale or if it could be sold as it was. He said the appraisal should be ready to present to the Board at the March meeting.

Commissioner Hartung thought it was important for transparency reasons to place the property for sale to the public.

Commissioner Jung agreed with Commissioner Hartung and said the County should receive the fairest amount of money for the land.

Commissioner Jung asked about the report of major incidents and asked who would be liable if Nevada Energy's arcing electrical wires caused a wildfire and burned an entire subdivision. She noted in other states the power companies were being held liable.

Deputy District Attorney David Watts-Vial said each case would need to be evaluated on its own merits. He said in a clear case where a company was blatantly negligent it would be easier to hold them liable, otherwise liability would be determined on a case by case basis. He stated he would do some research and if he found any information regarding liability he would bring it back to the Board.

Chair Berkbigler agreed with Commissioner Hartung about putting the property of Station 14 on the market. She thought only a General Improvement District (GID) was able to sell property without listing it for sale to the public. She said the County needed to follow the rules and sell the property in the appropriate manner.

Chief Moore said Agenda Items 8B and 8C were the career and volunteer statistics and unless there were any questions, he would let them stand as reported in the staff report.

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

18-010F **AGENDA ITEM 9** Presentation, discussion and possible direction to staff regarding Strategic Goals and Objectives for FY 18/19. (All Commission Districts.)

Chief Moore stated the budget process would be starting soon. He said he and Deputy Chief Scott Gorgon would be contacting the union about some of the issues they would like to see developed out of the budget. He said at the top of the list was hiring more people. One of the goals was to have a permanent rescue crew at Station 15. He said there was also discussion about adding an engine or even a ladder truck at Station 15. He said they wanted staffing at tender stations to increase to four-person crews. He stated having a fourth person at Station 35 in Verdi proved beneficial.

Chief Moore spoke regarding the new standards of cover and said in areas where the low priority emergency medical service (EMS) calls were it could reduce the call volumes by sending lower level resources to respond.

Chief Moore stated they wanted to study the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) accreditation process. He said it was a long process but the value of the study determined weaknesses in an organization and where there were gaps. He stated it included having a master plan to grow the department and to meet the objectives. He indicated it would be a significant commitment to become certified but he thought it was valuable to be accredited. He asked if the Board had any other budget items for staff to consider.

Commissioner Jung asked what the cost would be for the CPSE accreditation, what were the benefits to being accredited were and who else was accredited.

Chief Moore said there were two organizations that measured fire department effectiveness. He noted one organization was the CPSE and the other was a company named ISO, which used a grading system. He said TMPFD was a class 3/9 with ISO. He said the rural areas were determined to be a class 9 because they did not have a readily available water supply and areas where a water supply was available were rated as a class 3. He thought the ISO model benefited the insurance companies and helped them understand what their risks were. He said ISO did not help a fire department know where the weaknesses and gaps were. He did not know of any other fire departments in Northern Nevada that were accredited or were any seeking accreditation. He indicated the cost was mostly related to staff time. He said he and Chief Gorgon were going to a class to understand exactly what the process was in February in Davis, California. He noted the City of Sparks and the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority were attending also. He explained the accreditation did not help with grants but it helped them through objective measures and peer reviews from other accredited fire departments.

Commissioner Jung thought it was a great idea. She fully supported the process.

There was no public comment on this item.

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

18-011F **AGENDA ITEM 10** Discussion and possible direction to staff regarding methodology to calculate the cost to provide service to Sierra County, California. (Commission District 5.)

Chief Moore stated he had discussions with Sierra County regarding the service provided to them. Historically, the TMFPD only charged them \$10,000 annually and he thought it would be fair to say that amount of money did not cover the costs or

was necessarily a fair amount. He said that during discussions with the Manager of Sierra County, he was asked to establish a methodology to determine costs. He said the Sierra County Board of County Commissioners had approved a special assessment fund to pay the costs the TMFPD would charge for the provided services. The purpose was to develop a methodology and present it to this Board for approval. He said Chief Fiscal Officer Cindy Vance would explain how the calculations were developed. He indicated if the Board agreed with the process the next step would be to develop an agreement with Sierra County.

Ms. Vance stated a new contract with Sierra County was in process. She reviewed the background as stated in the staff report.

Commissioner Hartung wondered what it would cost Sierra County to provide the requested services themselves. He thought they were benefitting from an economy of scale from the TMFPD. He noted the TMFPD built the infrastructure and supplied all the equipment and staff. He suggested charging a base rate of \$40,000 and adding a fee onto each call.

Commissioner Jung asked for clarification. Ms. Vance replied the parcels could be calculated and charged based on property taxes collected in Washoe County.

Commissioner Jung wondered if the County was aware of the budget that Sierra County had and how much money they were making on property taxes. She thought the County should negotiate based on what they were collecting. She noted Nevada did not collect high property taxes as California did. She stated the \$10,000 they were paying per year was not nearly enough and she thought \$40,000 might be low as well. She wanted to see parity based on the property taxes collected per parcel in Sierra County as compared to the property taxes collected in Washoe County.

Commissioner Hartung agreed with Commissioner Jung. He thought fire services and emergency medical services (EMS) could be built into Sierra County's budget. He wondered how much money Sierra County would charge to supply the services that the TMFPD was providing.

Chief Moore said he understood there was a fire protection district that provided coverage for part of Verdi, California as shown on the map. He stated geographically the crews could not gain access to the other areas. He did not know what Sierra County charged for fire services but he thought the funds came from their general fund.

Commissioner Hartung said letters had been received from residents of Verdi, California demanding that the County increase their fire service.

Commissioner Jung stated it was important County taxpayers were not subsidizing another area's fire protection and EMS. She said if fire taxes ever needed to

be increased, she needed evidence that Sierra County was paying their share of the costs. She noted this issue needed to be completely transparent.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered to direct staff to continue negotiations and calculate the cost to provide service to Sierra County, California.

18-012F **AGENDA ITEM 11** Discussion and possible direction to staff regarding a District Facilities Master Plan to include existing fire stations and possible additional career and volunteer stations. (All Commission Districts.)

Chief Moore stated he would need to leverage consultants for this matter. He said the plan was to assess the condition of the current stations and note possible improvements. He noted the assessment would determine whether the station locations were appropriate for future growth and where future station locations would be needed. He said software was purchased to assist with the assessment. He thought the plan would cost \$75,000 to \$150,000 which would be spread over two fiscal years. He wanted the assessment to be thorough for an understanding of the needs at each station.

Commissioner Hartung was supportive of the assessment to determine where resources were needed.

Chair Berkbigler wondered if the study would consider annexations by the City of Reno.

Chief Moore stated part of the study would be to review Reno's and Sparks' plans for new stations. He hoped there could be some efficiencies developed in the region. He indicated discussions between the fire departments needed to occur. There were discussions about a developer paying for a fire station in Stonegate and he said Cold Springs could benefit from the close proximity of that station. He stated the cost of construction was very high and he was not sure how the City of Reno could build the five stations within their master plan. He said he and the Sparks Fire Chief had informal discussions about the possibility of sharing fire stations. He thought the study should address annexations and ideas for what the Cities and the County could do to help each other.

Chair Berkbigler asked how much of the Verdi area was in Reno's annexation plan. She thought the topic would possibly be brought up at the Regional Governing Control Board during master plan discussions. She said it was important to determine what the next steps were. She wondered if the County needed to improve fire protection in Verdi or if the City of Reno going to annex more or all of that area. She hoped the study would reveal what changes Reno would make in the next five years.

Chief Moore explained Station 14 was out in the country when it was built and it was surrounded by the City of Reno currently. He stated the TMFPD did not want to invest money for new stations in areas that would be annexed into or surrounded by the City of Reno. He noted if that occurred crews would lose the ability to respond to nearby calls.

Commissioner Jung wondered if Chief Moore could speculate about what the City of Reno would be annexing so the strategic planning process could be started. She thought a team should be established to assess land use planning and determine proposed growth regionally. She noted an assessment could potentially result in the need to sell some of the existing stations that were not effectively located.

Chair Berkgigler stated this Board did not want to lessen the impact of fire service in Verdi but wanted to improve the service there. She noted she did not want to spend money that would ultimately cost the County more in the future. She asked what the requirements were to mandate a developer to build a fire station. She asked staff to gather information and bring it back to the Board for review.

Commissioner Hartung wanted to know how to match responses with the need. Emergency medical service (EMS) calls did not need a fire engine to be sent.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 11 be approved.

18-013F **AGENDA ITEM 12** Discussion and direction to staff regarding the Green Waste Pilot Program to include support of the program and the development of a Request for Proposals to acquire capital equipment in support of the program.

Chief Moore stated staff wanted to purchase mobile equipment and dumpsters before developing the request for proposals (RFP). He displayed a brief video that demonstrated a masticator that was used to crush and chop trees and vegetation. He said they had made a significant investment in equipment including a chipper and a burn box. He indicated a masticator was acquired from the Sierra Fire Protection District. He said they were attempting to recycle as much vegetation as possible and to burn what could not be crushed or chipped. He stated in order to have a comprehensive program he wanted to buy more equipment and develop an RFP that would be brought back to the Board for consideration.

Commissioner Hartung said he needed assistance to create defensible space on his property. He wondered if the program could establish a fee for a crew to bring the equipment to a residence and assist the property owner to create defensible space. He noted it could reduce fire danger.

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 12 be approved.

18-014F **AGENDA ITEM 13** Announcements/Reports.

Commissioner Jung suggested the Washoe County work crew could help with the masticator for the green waste program. She asked staff to research and bring information back to the Board.

Chair Berkbigler asked whether the automatic aid agreement for Cold Springs was only for fire services or if it included emergency medical services. Chief Moore replied the automatic aid agreement for Cold Springs was only for fire services.

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

18-015F **AGENDA ITEM 14** Public Comment.

Sam Dehne spoke regarding the media refusing to print the truth.

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

MARSHA BERKBIGLER, Chair
Truckee Meadows Fire
Protection District

ATTEST:

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

Minutes Prepared By:
Doni Gassaway, Deputy County Clerk