

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

TUESDAY

9:00 a.m.

SEPTEMBER 18, 2018

PRESENT:

**Marsha Berkbigler, Chair**  
**Kitty Jung, Vice Chair\***  
**Bob Lucey, Commissioner**  
**Vaughn Hartung, Commissioner**

**Nancy Parent, County Clerk**  
**Charles Moore, Fire Chief**  
**David Watts-Vial, Deputy District Attorney**

ABSENT:

**Jeanne Herman, Commissioner**

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:

**18-139F**      **AGENDA ITEM 3** Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

**18-140F**      **AGENDA ITEM 4** Announcements/Reports.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore announced Agenda Item 13 would be pulled from the agenda because the union had not had time to act on the item. They wanted to hear from the union before the Board acted. The item would return at the October meeting.

**CONSENT ITEMS – 5A through 5F**

**18-141F**      **5A** Approval of minutes from the July 24, 2018 meeting.

**18-142F**      **5B** Discussion and possible approval of a Resolution to donate \$29,086.95 to East Fork Fire Protection District for reimbursement of the training costs related to a recently hired firefighter/paramedic. (All Commission Districts)

**18-143F**      **5C** Discussion and possible approval of a declaration of intent pursuant to NRS 332.185 to dispose of surplus property of the Truckee Meadows Fire

Protection District the items as outlined in the background. (All Commission Districts)

**18-144F** **5D** Possible approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between the District and Truckee Meadows Fire Fighters Association IAFF Local 2487 to allow for promotional examinations in deviation of Article 14 of the parties' collective bargaining agreement. (All Commission Districts)

**18-145F** **5E** Authorization to freeze one (1) vacant Firefighter/Paramedic position (#70010138) and to create one (1) additional flexibly staffed Fire Prevention Specialist I/ II position. (All Commission Districts)

**18-146F** **5F** Request to modify a Wildland Urban Interface Area Hazard designation from high to moderate for a 93 unit subdivision known as Colina Rosa, and if approved authorize staff to refer the matter to the Board of County Commissioners for final approval. (Commission District 2)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Lucey, which motion duly carried on a 3-0 vote with Commissioners Jung and Herman absent, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 5A through 5F be approved. Any and all Resolutions or Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Consent Agenda Items 5A through 5F are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

**18-147F** **AGENDA ITEM 6** I.A.F.F. Local 2487 Report.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore mentioned no one from the union was present to give a report.

### **PROCLAMATIONS**

**18-148F** **AGENDA ITEM 7** Fire Prevention Month Proclamation. (All Commission Districts)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Deputy Chief Lisa Beaver stressed the importance of awareness since fires could happen anywhere. She read the Proclamation.

**\*9:06 a.m. Commissioner Jung arrived.**

Chair Berkgigler praised Chief Moore for an article he wrote about the need for fire awareness.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Lucey, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Herman absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 7 be adopted.

**18-149F**      **AGENDA ITEM 8** Discussion and acceptance of a grant award of 100 smoke alarms from First Alert’s Town/Gown Fire Safety Community Service Project supporting Truckee Meadows Fire Protection Fire Prevention Division and approve a resolution of the same directing staff to make the necessary budget adjustments. (Commission Districts 3, 4 and 5)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Deputy Chief Lisa Beaver indicated District volunteer firefighter Randi Hunewell obtained a donation of 100 smoke alarms from First Alert. She stated this would coincide with Prevention Week where, on October 13, the District would utilize four fire stations to reinforce their awareness message. She stressed the importance of being aware of the entire community and added the District’s investigation of the Perry Fire would not have been possible without the public’s help. She instructed people to inform the District if they saw someone leaving an area where there was a fire. She stated smoke alarms would be available to people who did not have a functional one and announced they would hold a raffle to give away five emergency preparedness go bags to community members. She asked the Board to approve the item.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Lucey, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Herman absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 8 be accepted, approved, and directed.

**18-150F**      **AGENDA ITEM 9** Fire Chief Report. FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

- A.      Informational briefing on operational matters and activities for the month of July and August 2018
  - 1.      Operational Summaries
  - 2.      Outcomes of July 18 Meeting with Verdi Community
  - 3.      Status of TMWA Hydrant Maintenance Agreement
  - 4.      Green Waste Program
  - 5.      Regional Fire Issues
  - 6.      Discussion of Wildland Season
- B.      Commissioner Request Dashboard

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore noted the operational summaries for April would be distributed by the Clerk. He sought the Board’s feedback on the graphs, which he said he tried to simplify. He would provide statistics for May to September at the October meeting.

Chief Moore stated at a recent meeting with the Verdi community, Michael Beaudoin of the Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) and Chief Mike Brown discussed starting a fire adaptive community program. About 70 people attended the meeting and were interested in starting the program, which would help develop a community-wide fire protection plan. Mr. Beaudoin had informed Chief Moore there would be a substantial grant available which the District could apply for in November. Those funds would be used in the Verdi community for water cisterns and green waste programs. He mentioned there were a number of senior citizens who did not have the financial or physical means to harvest their green waste. While the District intended to host a green waste event anyway, the grant would significantly help improve the quality of Verdi's defensible space.

Commissioner Jung suggested partnering with Sierra Nevada Job Corps to help clear the brush in Verdi since they engaged in a lot of community outreach and volunteerism. She added the Job Corps participated in the revitalization project near 9th Street and Sutro Street by painting houses and fences. She offered to help Chief Moore connect with them.

Commissioner Hartung stressed there was also a need for this in Spanish Springs, Sun Valley, and other parts of the County. He wished to see a community-wide effort. Chief Moore responded the green waste program was so successful they had trouble masticating the material that had come in. He said the District reached out to contractors with heavier machinery because there were still piles of green waste that needed to be managed before the program began again in November. He mentioned the District might need to invest in heavier equipment and added NDF inmate crews could help with some of the heavy lifting. Chief Moore confirmed Commissioner Hartung's assertion inmate crews could not help until the material was removed from private property.

Chief Moore noted legal counsel had given feedback about the Truckee Meadows Water Authority's (TMWA's) hydrant maintenance agreement, which was forwarded to TMWA. He anticipated the agreement should be completed by November and hydrant maintenance would begin in January.

Commissioner Hartung inquired whether the District had discussions with Great Basin Water Company about doing hydrant maintenance in Cold Springs and Spanish Springs. He suggested he and Chief Moore could meet with them since those hydrants were a part of their infrastructure. Chief Moore responded staff would be performing maintenance for the last time in the fall and Chief Beaver was in charge of the hydrant maintenance program. Property owners or the water company would be responsible for testing any hydrants in a private system while TMWA would test the hydrants accessible to the public. Commissioner Hartung explained he was urging this because handling heavy pieces of infrastructure was not what firefighters were supposed to do. He stated TMWA benefitted because in other areas fire services had purged hydrants, which led to rusty water. He asked who tested hydrants in Sun Valley, to which Chief Moore answered the District did.

Chair Berkgigler asked who owned the hydrant in Lemmon Valley with an out-of-order sign on it. Chief Moore replied it was in the TMFPD's jurisdiction but the hydrant was not broken, the street valve was. He referred the issue to TMWA for repair. Commissioner Hartung offered to follow up with TMWA.

Chief Moore announced there would be another voluntary green waste processing drive over three weekends in November, one in Verdi, one in the north, and one in the south. Dates would be announced in early October.

Chief Moore stated he was encouraged by continued discussions between the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA), the Cities of Reno and Sparks, and the County about creating better efficiencies within the dispatch system. He indicated all parties agreed creating virtual dispatch was the first step, which would result in information populating on all dispatchers' screens immediately. Calling for automatic aid often resulted in delays of two to five minutes, negating the time saved by using a closer agency. He anticipated the technology would be tested over the following month and hoped to see a rollout of the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) to CAD system shortly thereafter to eliminate that inefficiency.

Chief Moore said there would then be a need for policy discussions between the Board and various agencies on whether to expand automatic aid to include some critical medical calls. He commented he had advocated for improvements in dispatch because, in previous medical emergencies, the closest station was never dispatched. He believed the City of Reno still had concerns about crew size, though he pointed out Verdi utilized a four-person crew.

Chief Moore stated a balance-of-trade study needed to be performed examining historical call volumes to see how always sending the closest unit would impact the District's call volume. He pointed out the TMFPD responded in Sparks ten times for every call Sparks responded in the District, though he acknowledged he did not mind because Sparks always responded to structure fires in Spanish Springs and Sun Valley. After the CAD to CAD system was implemented and policy questions were settled, the next step would be to address automatic vehicle location.

Commissioner Hartung noted Reno did not always respond with a four-person crew and stated he would rather have one person show up immediately to treat a patient while waiting for additional support than waiting for four to show up together. He stressed the need to have a discussion about utilizing smaller flex crews to respond to emergencies, who would only request additional support if needed. He told a story about multiple responders, including some on a ladder truck, who arrived to help an inebriated patron who fell off a barstool. He thought the focus should be responding to the citizens of Washoe County more quickly.

Chair Berkgigler asked when the Chief anticipated virtual dispatch to be ready. Chief Moore replied the CAD to CAD system could be ready by the end of 2018 and mentioned the delay was caused by the software companies Tiburon, Inc. and

TriTech Software Systems, who were working on their own schedules. Chair Berkbigler stressed the need to move forward quickly because there would be legislation related to fire services in Washoe County presented during the next legislative session.

Chief Moore reviewed the maps included with the staff report regarding wildland fires and said the fires had caused an impressive demand on local and regional resources. He stated there was an 80-acre fire in Palomino Valley, which was started accidentally, and he emphasized the need to be careful during this fire season since there had been no precipitation.

Commissioner Hartung praised Chief Moore and his staff for their response to the fires. He brought up the Chief's handling of the Pioche Fire. Chief Moore stated that was one of the more difficult fires to fight because of steep terrain and loose boulders. He indicated they utilized 10 helicopters, 10 engines, and 4 single-engine aircraft tankers, the latter being cited as the reason why the fire did not spread into the flat areas of Palomino Valley. He said the fire was contained before they needed to use a larger aircraft tanker. While the fire was fully in the TMFPD's jurisdiction, the District received assistance from numerous regional partners.

Chair Berkbigler said Nevada had experienced many fires and it was fortunate very few structures burned. She acknowledged the area was different than areas in California that experienced fires. She relayed the praise she received from citizens about the hands-on firefighters in the region. Commissioner Hartung lauded the regional fire effort and felt it could be used as an example of the necessity of regional cooperation.

Chief Moore indicated he would let the Board's request dashboard stand unless any Commissioners had anything to add. Chair Berkbigler mentioned the extension of fire fees was not on the dashboard but it was on the agenda.

**9:33 a.m. Commissioner Jung left the meeting.**

Chief Deputy Clerk Jan Galassini noted Chief Moore had provided an overview presentation, which she distributed to the Board and placed on record.

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

**18-151F** **AGENDA ITEM 10** Discussion and possible action to approve the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District to pay Workers' Compensation Heart and Lung Claims invoice dated July 23, 2018 from the City of Reno in the amount, not to exceed \$35,792.90 per the Reno-TMFPD Interlocal Agreement, subject to review by our independent actuary.(All Commission Districts)

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Lucey, which motion duly carried on a 3-0 vote with Commissioners Jung and Herman absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 10 be approved.

**18-152F**     **AGENDA ITEM 11** Presentation, 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)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore stated the methodology in the study first prioritized the needs of the District. Then it would examine whether fire stations were in the correct locations and whether future stations could be added or current ones eliminated based on regional deployment. Finally it would study how to pay for future stations.

Chief Deputy Jan Galassini distributed the documents to the Board.

Chair Berkbigler thought master plans were good for establishing general guidelines to study area needs.

Commissioner Hartung underscored his desire to implement flex crews since they could act inter-jurisdictionally. He stated they would allow for a more nimble response as opposed to those from fixed stations. He mentioned the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA) had a system to predict where incidents might occur. Chief Moore said flex crews could work in certain cases, though the need for fixed stations was driven by the insurance industry; fire stations were required at certain distances to receive reduced insurance rates.

Chief Moore noted the special use permit (SUP) for the Hidden Valley station expired in 2021. The SUP would allow a modular building on that site. He said the station had been placed there to service Hidden Valley in response to the City of Reno's cancellation of mutual aid with the District in 2012. He said they needed to discuss whether to build that station or engage with the Cities of Reno and Sparks about sharing responses. If that plan did not work, they would have to work on putting the station in the ground by 2021. He added there were two possible sites: the site of the existing station, which would need to be razed and rebuilt, and a parcel off Pembroke Drive. Both parcels were located in the flood plain and, though they could get the Pembroke station out of the 100-year flood plain, it would still be in the 500-year flood plain.

Chair Berkbigler asked whether there had been any discussion with Hidden Valley residents about the impacts on their insurance rates given the close proximity to the station. She wondered whether rates would rise if they utilized a mutual aid agreement with the City of Reno. She mentioned many houses abutted open space and could be at risk of fire. Chief Moore responded examining call volumes, call

locations, and the reach of the two nearby Reno and Sparks fire stations would all be part of the study, which would give the Board enough data to make its decision.

**9:40 a.m. Commissioner Jung returned.**

Commissioner Lucey remarked moving Station 14 further into town better served the Holcomb Ranch area but he expressed concern about the rural roads near Toll Road and Pleasant Valley. He admitted the stations at Eastlake as well as Stations 14 and 36 could assist but he felt there were still areas that lacked access. He wanted those areas addressed when considering the master plan.

Chair Moore responded the District would study a boundary drop with the Carson City Fire Department, though there were issues related to reflex time. Each department would be able to help out based on automatic vehicle location. He listed several possibilities, including consolidating Stations 30 and 16 in a better location, moving a volunteer resource, or adding a station. He thought the data would provide a good idea of what would need to happen. He added Engine 12 from Reno could reach Toll Road quickly but the issues with dispatch could negate its closer proximity. Commissioner Lucey reiterated the need to address the concerns in those areas.

Chief Moore reviewed the documentation included in the staff report and commented the Bowers Mansion station was on land leased from the State of Nevada. He mentioned the data would help clarify whether they should replace the Bowers Mansion station, consolidate Stations 30 and 16, or move Station 30 further south.

Chief Moore noted the District leased its logistics and fleet maintenance facility for \$100,000 annually and its administration facility for \$135,000 a year. He contemplated transferring those rents to debt service for two new buildings.

Chief Moore said he felt the Spanish Springs station was in a good location but it needed modernization in the form of new finishes and interior work. He pointed out the Verdi volunteer station had no running water or restrooms which was problematic during red flag events. He said a better station was necessary for a good volunteer program. He was unsure whether the District needed two volunteer stations in Washoe Valley but improving the stations was difficult because the District did not own them. He thought there were opportunities to consolidate those stations either with a new Station 30 or in a new location. He estimated the projects could take ten years given the number of facilities but the presentation was meant to illustrate his priorities before studying the data.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Lucey, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion duly carried 4-0 with Commissioner Herman absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 11 be approved.



**18-153F**      **AGENDA ITEM 12** Presentation, discussion and possible direction to staff regarding a possible District boundary adjustment to include Gerlach, Nevada (as outlined in the attached map) at the request direction of Commissioner Berkgigler. (Commission Districts 5)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore explained the topic originated several months prior during a presentation about adjusting the District's northern boundary to include parts of Palomino Valley. The County approached him about expanding the boundary to include Gerlach. Included in the staff report was a study of the financial aspect of that proposal.

Chief Moore explained under the County-wide Cost Allocation Plan (COWCAP), the TMFPD paid the County for services provided to the District and the County provided funds to ensure coverage for areas north of Township 22. He stated the District provided fire prevention services in Gerlach as well as training and support for one set amount, regardless of whether there was one fire or a thousand.

Chief Moore stated he studied how much a boundary change would cost the District. He noted federal and tribal lands were not taxable. The proposed expansion would only generate about \$300,000 while costing the District between \$1.2 million and \$1.8 million depending on the level of service. He said the District would have to deficit spend for the first year or two until revenues caught up. He remarked expansion could compete against other needs such as staffing a station near an Apple facility. He asked the Board to consider future plans in addition to serving Gerlach.

Chief Moore opined a solution regarding Gerlach should require some help from Burning Man. He pointed out spending more than \$1 million on Gerlach was problematic because it was a small community of 80 people, though he added the expenditure would cover everything north of Township 22, not just Gerlach. He believed the solution could include non-traditional ways of delivering fire service. He mentioned a significant expense would be the higher cost of District hiring compared to what the County provided.

Chair Berkgigler stated County staff, although effective, were not trained in fire services, and the TMFPD could handle the area in a more financially sound way. She suggested the District could still use volunteer firefighters and the equipment already in Gerlach. Regarding including everyone north of Township 22 into the District's tax base, she asked whether the District was already providing service to tribal and federal lands. Chief Moore answered they did though the tribal land had its own fire protection service that often made the initial response; in those cases the TMFPD provided mutual aid. Chief Moore said the TMFPD provided first response on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land but added the BLM provided mutual aid to the District. Chair Berkgigler asked whether the expansion would impact the service the TMFPD was already providing, to which Chief Moore answered it would not.

Commissioner Hartung noted it was difficult for the Board as they served both the TMFPD and the County. He said the need was caused by Burning Man, a 501c3 company, which netted between \$50 and \$70 million a year. He felt the \$1.831 million cost quoted by Chief Moore was minor for Burning Man. He stated there were needs at a number of other stations and he had a hard time burdening taxpayers to provide a service not given to citizens in Verdi and Wadsworth. He wished to see better solutions and would not vote on this without participation from Burning Man.

Chair Berkbigler clarified that amount of money was already being spent, only by the County and not the TMFPD. She agreed having discussions with Burning Man about participating in the process would be beneficial.

Commissioner Jung asked who would pay for the fire district if the expansion were to happen. Referring to the map in the staff report, Chief Moore said any parcels located in yellow portions would. Commissioner Jung indicated that would include people in the Red Rock area, who she described as having good property worth, and other citizens the District was already subsidizing. She stressed this expansion was not just about Burning Man, which was only in the area for a month. She felt the area should be preparing for growth in the north. She acknowledged Commissioner Hartung's reticence but called public safety a fundamental service provided by the government. She pointed out if the District found the situation to be unsustainable, the County could be used as a general fund.

Commissioner Jung remarked property in Gerlach was being bought up by Burning Man patrons and the area would expand and have additional demands. She said the County spent money to provide unsatisfactory fire service and she felt the cost burden and the tax collection should be shifted to the District.

Commissioner Lucey stated the two-person shifts listed in the staff report would be located in Gerlach, which Chief Moore confirmed. The Commissioner asked whether those people would also respond to northern Palomino Valley or Red Rock calls. Chief Moore stated they would not; those areas would be serviced by Station 17 in Spanish Springs and Station 18 in Red Rock. Commissioner Lucey stated the tax collection would offset the costs of stationing individuals in Gerlach, a point Chief Moore also confirmed.

Chair Berkbigler pointed out citizens in the areas north of Township 22 already received the same services as those provided to citizens in unincorporated areas south of Township 22. She thought it was illogical for people in Washoe Valley to pay for a service provided to people who were not paying for it. She thought there were two parts to this issue: expanding the northern boundary to include all unincorporated properties and addressing the concerns in Gerlach specifically. She directed the Chief to bring the item back in two parts. She recommended increasing the tax rate to cover those citizens currently receiving the service. She thought perhaps the County budget could provide a reduction in the COWCAP. She said it was important to consider how service was provided in Lemmon Valley and Cold Springs.

Commissioner Hartung thought the item could be segmented as there could be more than two impacted areas.

Chair Berkbigler asked whether a motion was needed. Deputy District Attorney David Watts-Vial responded they could make a motion for something very specific but he thought the Chief understood the thoughts of the Commissioners and could decide the best way to proceed.

Chief Moore stated the District could take over management of the area and relieve the Emergency Manager and the Assistant County Manager of that burden. He pointed out the COWCAP was vague and suggested modifying it as a first step.

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

**18-154F**      **AGENDA ITEM 14** Possible Closed Session pursuant to NRS 288.220 for the purpose of discussing with management representatives labor matters and negotiations.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore indicated staff needed a closed session with the Board. Deputy District Attorney David Watts-Vial stated the Board would need to make a motion to adjourn and reconvene later, where the meeting could be completed. There was a brief discussion where it was determined the motion would be made later in the meeting.

There was no public comment on this item.

**18-155F**      **AGENDA ITEM 15** Announcements/Reports.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore suggested adding an item regarding legislative updates, to which Chair Berkbigler agreed. Chief Moore announced the TMFPD's annual report was included in the Board's packets and was available to the public online and in paper form.

Commissioner Jung felt the County-wide Cost Allocation Plan (COWCAP) needed to be reviewed. She said the COWCAP had been devised to help the County out of a difficult budget situation and to discover waste and unaccountability. She thought it was important to evaluate what the County would continue to charge other departments and what would be dropped.

Chair Berkbigler asked whether the District had a fire education program for schools that provided smoke alarms to children. Chief Moore replied the District visited schools regularly year-round. Chair Berkbigler thought schools in lower-income community could benefit from the District providing smoke alarms for children to take home since many of those home might not have alarms.

For the benefit of the Lemmon Valley citizens at the meeting, Chair Berkbigler brought up a fire hydrant with an out-of-order sign that had been discussed earlier. She explained the problem was with the Truckee Meadows Water Authority's valve and the District was working with them to repair the hydrant.

**18-156F      AGENDA ITEM 16 Public Comment.**

Ms. Tammy Holt-Still claimed the Board of County Commissioners approved a development without Chief Moore's consent. She urged the Board to consider how staff would be able to respond to its residents and expressed concern about slow response times to the area. She expressed frustration about removal of the state of emergency designation from the Lemmon Valley area. She felt there would not be fire coverage for the new development.

**10:11 a.m.**      On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Lucey, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Herman absent, it was ordered that the meeting recess to a closed session after the Board of County Commission meeting for the purpose of discussing with management representatives labor matters and negotiations.

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**1:24 p.m.**      There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

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

ATTEST:

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

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