

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

TUESDAY

9:00 A.M.

DECEMBER 15, 2020

PRESENT:

Bob Lucey, Chair
Marsha Berkbigler, Vice Chair
Kitty Jung, Commissioner (via telephone)
Vaughn Hartung, Commissioner (via Zoom)
Jeanne Herman, Commissioner

Janis Galassini, County Clerk
Charles Moore, Fire Chief
Mary Kandaras, 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:

20-169F **AGENDA ITEM 3** Public Comment.

Dr. Bob Parker thanked the Board of Fire Commissioners, Vice Chair Berkbigler in particular, for their support of the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD). He hoped the Board would continue to support the TMFPD as the region and the need for firefighters and paramedics continued to grow.

20-170F **AGENDA ITEM 4** Announcements/Reports.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore thanked Vice Chair Berkbigler for her support and wished her success in her future endeavors. Vice Chair Berkbigler expressed appreciation for the well-wishes and expressed confidence in her fellow Board members and County leadership.

Commissioner Hartung thanked Vice Chair Berkbigler for her service, stating she would be missed. Chair Lucey commented it had been an honor to serve with her on the Board of Fire Commissioners for the past several years.

CONSENT ITEMS – 5A through 5C

20-171F **5A** Recommendation to approve the meeting minutes from the November 10, 2020 Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting.

20-172F **5B** Recommendation to approve amending the existing Collective Bargaining Agreement between Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District

and Truckee Meadows Firefighters Association IAFF Local 2487 Non-Supervisory Unit for the purpose of modifying several provisions related to staffing requirements of the District's ambulances. (All Commission Districts)

20-173F 5C Recommendation to accept a CARES Act Subgrant award in the amount of \$45,000 from Washoe County to reimburse costs, salaries, benefits and supplies related to providing COVID 19 testing and vaccines and administering flu vaccine PODS and authorize Finance to make appropriate budget adjustments. (All Commission Districts)

There was no public comment on the Consent Agenda Items listed above.

On motion by Vice Chair Berkbigler, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 5A through 5C be approved. The Resolution pertinent to Consent Agenda Item 5C is attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

20-174F AGENDA ITEM 6 Recommendation to accept a donation from Nor Cal EVI in the amount of \$3,251.00 for the emergency light package build up on the District's Polaris General 4 1000 Deluxe Ride UTV and approve a resolution directing staff to make the necessary budget adjustments and express appreciation for the thoughtful contribution. (All Commission Districts)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore explained staff's recommendation was to accept the donated emergency light package. Chair Lucey thanked Nor Cal Emergency Vehicle Installations for supporting the District.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Vice Chair Berkbigler, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 6 be accepted and approved. The Resolution for same is attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

20-175F AGENDA ITEM 7 Recommendation to accept and express thoughtful appreciation for a monetary donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 from private citizen J. Edward Trapp in operational support to Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Foothill Fire Station #33 and if accepted, direct Finance Department to make appropriate budget adjustments. (All Commission Districts)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore expressed gratitude and noted the donation from J. Edward Trapp would be used to support operations at the Foothill Fire Station 33. Chair Lucey thanked Mr. Trapp for his generosity.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Berkbigler, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 7 be accepted, expressed, and directed. The Resolution for same is attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

20-176F **AGENDA ITEM 8** National Weather Service Winter Outlook presented by Chris Smallcomb.

Via Zoom, National Weather Service meteorologist and Public Information Officer Chris Smallcomb conducted a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk. He reviewed slides with the following titles: Ready for More Snow?; Summer – Hot, Dry and Smoky, Continued Dry, Warm Well into October; Everyone Gets a Red Flag Warning!; Sunday November 8th – Snow Boom!; So That Ended Fire Season, Right?; Where Are We Today?; Are We Behind on Snowpack?; After a Few Years Break; La Niña: What Does That Mean for Our Winter?; OK, What Do The Winter Models Actually Show?; If You Like Pie (Charts); Scenarios We Freakout About; More Deets on Burn Scar Flooding; Flood Risk Modeling; and Thanks for Listening!

Mr. Smallcomb commented that, although snowfall in early November had provided some much-needed precipitation in the region, fuel moisture levels remained quite low. The combination of dry fuels and 78 mile-per-hour wind gusts had contributed to the recent Pinehaven Fire in the Caughlin Ranch area, and high wind speeds also made fighting recent fires in the Walker/Coleville and Doyle, California areas difficult. He displayed a photo of a pyrocumulus cloud over the Mountain View Fire and indicated it was unusual to see such phenomena so late in the year; he felt this provided strong evidence that the climate was changing. He emphasized residents needed to keep their guard up and remain prepared for fires into the winter season, particularly on high wind warning days. He hoped fuels would continue to absorb moisture as the winter season progressed, reducing the region's fire hazards.

Mr. Smallcomb expressed concern that significant drought seemed to be returning to the region, and another dry winter could have ramifications for the 2021 fire season. He indicated Lake Tahoe's current water supply might be sufficient to serve the region's metropolitan population in 2021, but the more rural parts of the county and its mountain areas could be affected. These factors, along with increasing vegetation dryness throughout the area, could present additional wildfire risks.

The region was entering a La Niña, or a tropical, cooler weather pattern, Mr. Smallcomb continued, but this did not necessarily indicate how wet or dry the winter might be. He explained some La Niña winters resulted in increased precipitation and flooding, yet others ended up being mild. Though the 2020-2021 winter season appeared to be starting off slow, he warned this could change quickly. Increased precipitation would be good for the region's water supply but could also increase flood risks. Since the past

few winters had been relatively dry, he added, there was some room in lakes and reservoirs, but a series of very wet storms could reverse that.

Mr. Smallcomb displayed a photo from 2018 depicting mudslide damage in a burn-scarred area. He warned post-fire flooding could be a concern if significant moisture with periods of high-intensity rainfall occurred in the region. Often, such events happened with little to no warning, so residents needed to be aware of this risk in recently-burned areas such as near Pinehaven, Red Rock and Loyalton, and the Poeville Fire area near Peavine Mountain. Vice Chair Berkbigler agreed burn scar flood concerns would need to be kept in mind, particularly with some of the burn areas being so close to the city.

Mr. Smallcomb discussed how the accuracy of specific weather predictions decreased as forecasts went further into the future. Commissioner Jung wanted to know if Mr. Smallcomb could give a general prediction of the overall winter to come, particularly regarding the possibility of flooding or moisture. Mr. Smallcomb indicated he could not speak to the expected amounts of moisture, but residents should prepare for the possibility of high-water issues any time they heard the words “atmospheric river” in the weekly forecast. Commissioner Jung commented that Mr. Smallcomb obviously loved his job and the Board appreciated his presentations.

Commissioner Hartung thought it would be good to discuss and prepare for future drought and the impact it would have on the region’s water reserves if the winter did not provide much moisture; the area should also be prepared for the possibility of flooding. He expressed a desire to have Mr. Smallcomb speak at a Truckee Meadows Water Authority meeting.

Mr. Smallcomb emphasized the key takeaway from his presentation was that the region had experienced a few dry winters recently and the likelihood of severe drought was increasing. Commissioner Herman thanked him for the excellent presentation.

Chair Lucey recalled that past La Niña winters had brought significant moisture or cold weather to the area. He shared concerns regarding spring runoff and flooding in the County’s burn-scarred areas. Mr. Smallcomb reiterated La Niñas tended to be unpredictable. Some of the region’s larger river flow events had occurred during La Niña years, he said, but other times they were mild and unremarkable. He urged residents to be alert and prepared for potential high-water situations as well as the possibility of a dry winter with worsening drought in 2021. Chair Lucey thanked Mr. Smallcomb for his presentation and expressed appreciation for the discussion.

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

20-177F **AGENDA ITEM 9** International Association of Firefighters, Local 2487 Report.

1. General Status Update
2. Letter of Appreciation for Fire Commissioner Marsha Berkbigler

International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 2487 President Josh Kutz felt the year had flown by, noting his daughter had been born in January 2020 just prior to the beginning of the COVID-19 (C19) pandemic. He stated the pandemic had been challenging for union members as a whole, mentioning that staff had to make adjustments such as wearing N95 masks in order to protect themselves from infection and set a good example for the community. He reviewed other events from the year including multiple large-scale fires which, at one point, had required the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) to call in more than two-thirds of staff in order to help. Additionally, new equipment was installed at Station 33, new fuels crews were being put into service, and medical transport capability was increased to better serve the community during the pandemic. He said large incidents during the 2020 summer, combined with mandatory quarantines and illnesses, had left union members exhausted and hopeful for a winter slowdown.

Mr. Kutz noted nine probationary employees had entered their second quarter of employment, and he anticipated additional staff would be hired in the beginning of 2021. The new physical agility test, validated by 84 TMFPD personnel, would allow for evaluation of 54 individuals, and the entire test could be conducted indoors at the Barron Way facility.

Mr. Kutz read a letter of appreciation expressing gratitude for the eight years of outstanding service Vice Chair Berkbigler had dedicated to supporting the TMFPD and IAFF Local 2487. He said she had been a strong advocate for the District and staff, and he knew her impact and legacy would not be forgotten.

Chair Lucey wanted to know how morale was among staff, considering how tough the year had been. Mr. Kutz felt morale was excellent given the circumstances. He said it was tough for staff not being able to cook and eat together at the stations due to the need for social distancing and wearing N95 masks. He thought this contributed to a bit of lost camaraderie, but he hoped things would be back to normal next year. Mr. Kutz commended Captain Derek Reid for spearheading the peer support program, which provided multiple services for staff whether they were dealing with family, work-related, financial, pandemic, or other types of stress. Chair Lucey felt the program was an important part of keeping the workforce healthy and happy, particularly during a pandemic or a challenging fire season.

Commissioner Jung was pleased the District had stepped up to assist with vaccinations and would play an instrumental role in helping the region address the C19 pandemic. She said she was impressed with how much first responders did beyond fighting fires and responding to emergencies, and she reminded everyone how integral their roles

were to the community. She felt the District was well prepared, and this was a testament to both the organization's leadership as well as its administrative staff.

Commissioner Hartung genuinely appreciated the crews' hard work, agreeing that 2020 had been a difficult year. He said he could not imagine showing up to emergency calls with no idea what to expect, and he hoped staff would stay safe, protect themselves, and let the Board know how they could assist if needed. He hoped the C19 vaccine would be available to the community soon.

Chair Lucey mentioned the Washoe County Health District had received its first vaccine shipment that morning, and he looked forward to receiving more shipments in the days and weeks to come.

Mr. Kutz noted that IAFF Local 2487 recently held a general membership election. He thanked IAFF Trustee John Steven and Vice President Clint Hayes for their work in making the union what it had become. Newly-elected Vice President Jamie Rivera and Trustee Travis Johnson would begin in January.

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

20-178F **AGENDA ITEM 10** Fire Chief Report

A. Informational briefing on operational matters and activities for the month of November and December 2020 to include the following items:

1. Fire Station Development Update
 2. Revenue Update
 3. Green Waste Collection Summary
 4. Delivery of Chip Trucks
 5. Public Safety Outage Plan
 6. TMFR Medic Response
 7. Flu and COVID Vaccinations Update
 8. Open Burning
 9. Purchase of Barron Way Building and Other Capital Projects Financing
- B. Commissioner DashBoard: Status update on ongoing Commissioner requests of the Fire Chief
- C. Review of recent critical calls response statistics for October 2020 to include Mutual and Auto Aid for our regional partners.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore announced the District would soon begin interviewing Construction Management at Risk (CMAR) contractors for Hidden Valley Station 37 and Barron Way facility improvements. Working with a CMAR contractor would be helpful during the bond financing process, as it would allow the District to know exactly how much money would be needed.

Chief Moore thanked NV Energy for being a substantial partner in the District's fuels crew expansion, saying their assistance had supported enough staff to run

20 green waste collection points and tripled the number of collection days offered to the public.

Chief Moore explained staff intended to recommend going before the Debt Management Commission (DMC) in January for the purpose of financing the purchase of the Barron Way facility as the District's central home for administration, logistics and warehousing, and fleet maintenance activities. If the Board and the DMC approved the proposed plans, staff hoped to bring forth a Resolution of Intent by March of 2021. This would be followed by a three-month waiting period, after which the District could sell bonds and begin the property purchase, hopefully sometime in September or October 2021. The Chief felt interest rates should still be attractive by that time, and he noted the purchase would improve the District's cash flow by eliminating the taxes it currently paid as a leaseholder rather than a property owner.

Chair Hartung expressed enthusiasm for the potential property purchase, saying he preferred that the District be a landlord rather than a tenant whenever feasible, as this provided additional stability. He hoped the District would be able to negotiate a good price for the property given the current economy. He asked about the architectural design for proposed Stations 33 and 37, and Chief Moore explained the intent was to model the consolidated station after the Foothills Station 33, as that model had worked well for the District. Station 37 in Hidden Valley would be more unique, as the District had purchased a residential home which would be connected to the station, eliminating the need to construct residential quarters for the staff. A sprinkler system needed to be added to the existing home, and a walkway connecting the home to the fire station would be built, along with a new apparatus bay.

Commissioner Hartung wondered what the timeframe was for the project, and Chief Moore replied the Board of Adjustment had approved it during their December meeting, so he hoped construction could begin on the apparatus bay sometime in June of 2021. Commissioner Hartung inquired whether Station 46 might eventually be relocated to a more central location in Spanish Springs. Chief Moore said staff intended to initiate that discussion in February or March as they evaluated the potential future location of Station 46 and the needs of other northern neighborhoods. Commissioner Hartung expressed concern that the current parcel might not have great land value, saying it was somewhat locked-in, and he expressed interest in being involved with negotiations and conversations with developers and property owners in the region to help the District find a suitable new location.

Commissioner Jung agreed government entities should own properties rather than lease them whenever possible. She indicated fire department facilities were necessary and would be useful for years to come, so it made sense the District should become the rightful owner of those properties so as to make improvements as needed. She felt the District's ownership could also stabilize neighborhoods and create social and economic benefits for the surrounding areas.

Chair Lucey thanked staff for doing a great job despite the challenges of 2020, and he felt the District was poised to do great things in the future. Vice Chair Berkgigler inquired whether the residential property in Hidden Valley had yet been listed for sale, and Chief Moore responded the agreement was in his inbox and would be the next thing he worked on.

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

20-179F **AGENDA ITEM 11** Commissioner Marsha Berkgigler Resolution of Appreciation.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore asked staff to join him in expressing their appreciation and heartfelt wishes to Vice Chair Berkgigler for continued success in her future endeavors. He knew she would be missed.

Vice Chair Berkgigler thanked everyone and indicated it was her pleasure to work with a terrific District and staff who did wonderful things for the citizens they served. She was presented with a plaque to commemorate her service to the TMFPD, its staff, and citizens.

Chair Lucey admired the love and dedication Vice Chair Berkgigler had put into her eight years of service as a Commissioner. He said she earned the trust and gratitude of staff, and her shoes would be difficult to fill. He thanked her again for her service.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Chair Lucey, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 11 be approved. The Resolution pertinent to same is attached hereto and made part of the minutes thereof.

20-180F **AGENDA ITEM 12** Recommendation to accept Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District's Audited Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2020 as presented; approve the re-appropriation of \$4,302,608.56 for the fiscal year 2020 budget, consisting of \$133,940.72 in the General Fund and \$4,168,667.84 in the Capital Projects Fund for purchase order encumbrances committed in fiscal year 2020 and authorize the District to proceed with distribution of the Financial Statements for public record, as required by law. (All Commission Districts)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore commented the District was in excellent financial shape under the guidance of Chief Fiscal Officer (CFO) Cindy Vance, and it intended to stay that way.

Via Zoom, Ms. Vance thanked Chief Moore and also noted the hard work of Eide Bailly Senior Audit Associate Kurt Schlicker. She reviewed the details outlined in

the staff report and concluded the audit opinion had come back clean and the District was in good financial shape.

Vice Chair Berkbigler commended Ms. Vance on the excellent financial report, saying she was fascinated that the TMFPD remained consistently solvent despite its limited income. This, she felt, was a testament to Ms. Vance's fiscal oversight and wise use of taxpayer dollars, as well as good management in general. She appreciated that the District managed to maintain excellent service during a difficult year, challenging fire season, and a global pandemic. She also thanked Chief Moore and the rest of the TMFPD's leadership team, as well as the staff members on the front lines.

Commissioner Hartung commended Ms. Vance and Chief Moore, expressing pride that the District continued to be a regional model of excellence. He believed the purchase of certain needed pieces of equipment over the years and the addition of paramedics to every crew had contributed to the TMFPD's success.

Commissioner Jung thanked staff for being conservative with the District's budget and Chief Moore for exercising discretion, creative use of resources, and risk-taking when appropriate. She felt Ms. Vance's recently approved raise was well-deserved for the creation of a sustainable business model. She also expressed appreciation for the foresight of Chief Moore and the Board as a whole. Commissioner Herman agreed and gave thanks to the staff.

Chair Lucey said the excellent fiscal report was precisely the type of accomplishment the Board hoped Ms. Vance would achieve when she first joined the TMFPD as CFO four years ago. Fiscal operations had allowed the District to continue to expand and provide excellent service to the public, thanks in part to the excellent executive team and front-line staff. He hoped the TMFPD would maintain the same high level of fiscal responsibility, quality, and sustainability into the future. He believed the focus on revenues needed to continue, as well as the fight regarding annexation as the region grew, a cause which Commissioner Jung had championed. He pledged the Board would continue to work with and support Ms. Vance as much as she supported the District itself.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Vice Chair Berkbigler, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 12 be accepted, approved, and authorized.

20-181F **AGENDA ITEM 13** 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 stated there was no need for a closed session. There was no public comment on this item.

20-182F **AGENDA ITEM 14** Announcements/Reports.

Vice Chair Berkbigler wished to close out her term by thanking everyone and expressing her confidence that positive growth would continue in the District and the community.

Commissioner Hartung thanked staff and crews for their hard work and wished everyone a healthy and safe holiday season, looking forward with hope to 2021.

20-183F **AGENDA ITEM 15** Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

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10:16 a.m. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

BOB LUCEY, Chair
Truckee Meadows Fire
Protection District

ATTEST:

JANIS GALASSINI, Washoe County Clerk
and Ex-Officio Clerk, Truckee Meadows
Fire Protection District

*Minutes Prepared By:
LJ Burton, Deputy County Clerk*