

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

TUESDAY

9:00 A.M.

JUNE 1, 2021

PRESENT:

**Bob Lucey, Chair**  
**Vaughn Hartung, Vice Chair**  
**Alexis Hill, Commissioner**  
**Kitty Jung, Commissioner**  
**Jeanne Herman, Commissioner**

**Catherine Smith, Chief Deputy County Clerk**  
**Charles Moore, Fire Chief**  
**Wade Carner, Deputy District Attorney**

The Board convened at 10:01 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:

**21-106F**      **AGENDA ITEM 3** Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

**21-107F**      **AGENDA ITEM 4** Announcements/Reports.

Vice Chair Hartung asked for information about the two fatalities that occurred on Pyramid Highway.

Chair Lucey said Memorial Day was a time to remember fallen veterans, but it was also a weekend where residents frequented the outdoors. There was a fire in the Logan Meadows area, and the Chair praised the response from the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District, which was able to contain the fire to one acre. He also thanked the Reno Fire Department for working the fire. Fire Chief Charles Moore added the City of Sparks also responded.

**CONSENT ITEMS – 5A, 5B, 5D, and 5E**

**21-108F**      **5A** Recommendation to approve the meeting minutes from the May 4, 2021 and May 18, 2021 Board of Fire Commissioners Meetings.

**21-109F**      **5B** Recommendation to authorize staff to submit a request for reimbursement on a quarterly basis from the Washoe County, Nevada Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust Fund for the cost of retiree health insurance premiums for Fiscal Year 2021-22. This Trust was established to

provide a funding source for current and future retiree health costs. Monies transferred from this Trust will be placed into the District's General Fund. (All Commission Districts)

**21-110F** **5D** Recommendation to approve retroactive and continued purchases for needed supplies, materials, equipment and contractual services from various suppliers that have or will exceed in the aggregate \$100,000 during this fiscal year but will remain within available adopted budget funding. All such purchases will continue to be subject to and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Purchasing Act. Vendors receiving these additional funds include the following: ARC Health & Wellness, LLC, Allstar Fire Equipment, and Harris Corporation. Amounts to be paid to each of these vendors, respectively, shall not exceed \$150,000. The supplies, fuel, materials, equipment and contractual services to be provided by each include but are not limited to equipment repairs, equipment supplies, tires and installation. (All Commission Districts)

**21-111F** **5E** Recommendation to approve a 5-year cooperative agreement between Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District and City of Sparks Fire Department for automatic, enhanced and mutual aid on occasions when each agency experiences fires or other emergencies of such a magnitude that assistance of other fire response organizations would be beneficial in addressing the emergencies. (All Commission Districts)

Commissioner Hill requested that Consent Agenda Item 5C be pulled from the Consent Agenda.

There was no response to the call for public comment on the Consent Agenda Items listed above.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Hartung, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 5A, 5B, 5D, and 5E be approved. Any and all Resolutions or Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Consent Agenda Items 5A, 5B, 5D, and 5E are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

**21-112F** **5C** Recommendation to approve a resolution amending mitigation rates for the deployment of emergency services by the fire department for services provided/rendered by Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District and approve a service agreement with Fire Recovery USA, LLC to assist with the billing of these services. (All Commission Districts)

Commissioner Hill felt it was great to recover more emergency revenue but asked whether any other bids were received for this proposal. Deputy Fire Chief Alex Kukulius responded it was anticipated that Fire Recovery USA, LLC would take a much smaller amount from those bills than would be required to use a public bid process. He

noted the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District had a vendor who did ambulance transport and vehicle accident billings, but they did not do the services that would be covered by this rate schedule. Fire Recovery USA, LLC worked with 1,300 fire and police agencies. Commissioner Hill said she did not see that in the staff report, and it would be good to know on similar items in the future that the Purchasing Department was consulted. Deputy Chief Kukulus said it would be included.

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

**21-113F**      **AGENDA ITEM 6** National Weather Service "2021 Spring and Summer Fire Season Outlook", presented by Chris Smallcomb.

Via the Zoom app, Chris Smallcomb of the National Weather Service (NWS) conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Winter 2020-21; Why Was it So Dry?; Dry Soils; Drought is Back; Drought & Fire; Has Recent Rain & Snow Helped?; So, What's the Forecast?; Next 2 Weeks (2 slides); Water Supply; Summer Outlook (2 slides); Fire Season 2021; Great Basin Rangeland; What keeps it from becoming a big year?; and NWS Reno Fire Wx Services.

Mr. Smallcomb stated the snowpack was well below normal, which would have only been drier without the only storm of the year, an atmospheric river in January. He pointed out snow melt was happening earlier, and the area was about a month ahead of a typical year. He explained the Reno area was about two to four inches of rainfall behind a normal year, which was not trivial considering the area only received about seven inches a year. Two dry winters in a row resulted in record soil dryness, though that also resulted in grass growth being sparser and shorter.

Mr. Smallcomb indicated the region had been in a D1-level drought at the beginning of the pandemic, but most of Washoe County was currently in D3-level drought; D4-level drought approached dust bowl status and much of Nevada was in that range. He mentioned droughts typically took years but this one had come on in only two years, which could impact rural residents who relied on well and stream water. One area of concern was that timber was already at summer levels of dryness; areas such as Logan Meadows, which just experienced a fire, were areas that contained much of that dry timber.

Mr. Smallcomb remarked thunderstorm season was approaching, though the chance of widespread rain events had largely passed. He anticipated a 30 to 40 percent chance of receiving at least a tenth of an inch of rain over the following week, though there was likely no chance of receiving at least a half inch before June 15. Drops in temperatures were often accompanied by heavier winds, and there was a 50 to 70 percent chance of 40-plus miles per hour winds the following Monday. He reviewed some of the expected stream flows through July, pointing out the Truckee River was forecasted to be at 32 percent of normal. He explained a robust monsoon could result in thunderstorms with more wetting

rain, but it was unclear how much precipitation to expect this summer. He added that probable heatwaves this summer could impact the large events coming to the area.

Regarding wildland fire potential, Mr. Smallcomb said analysis showed that lower elevations could be near normal, but the foothills and the Sierra mountains could potentially experience a big year. He reiterated a strong monsoon could help with widespread rain, pointing to one day in August 2014 where it rained all day, basically quelling the fire season that year. He remarked that incident meteorologists were deployed on larger incidents to provide dedicated support for up to two weeks. He noted the NWS was working with NV Energy and Liberty Utilities, among others, to help deploy and expand weather stations, in turn helping provide assessments of wind, relative humidity, and winter storms. He said the particularly dangerous situation designation was reserved for the worst days; he hoped to only issue these once or twice a year, and all forecasters had to agree before the designation could be issued. During these events, evacuation messaging was crucial because people were sometimes only given minutes to leave. Lastly, he said the NWS was working with partner agencies on smoke forecasting to prepare people for bad days.

Vice Chair Hartung lauded Mr. Smallcomb for a prior prediction that the area would not experience a ‘miracle March’.

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

**21-114F**     **AGENDA ITEM 7** Recommendation to accept a Commission District 5 Special Fund Donation sponsored by Washoe County Commissioner Jeanne Herman in support of Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District’s Palomino Valley Volunteer Department for \$2,000 and to Silver Lake Volunteer Department in the amount of \$2,000 for a combined total of \$4,000 to be spent on Volunteer Operations and if approved, approve a resolution amending the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District General Fund Budget. (Commission District 5)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore thanked Commissioner Herman, saying the donations would be used by the Silver Lake department for more wildland protective clothing, and by the Palomino Valley department for more signage. Chair Lucey thanked Commissioner Herman for her continuous support of those volunteer fire departments, noting many paid firefighting staff started out as volunteers.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

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

**21-115F**      **AGENDA ITEM 8** Recommendation to approve an agreement for legal services with Eglet Prince, LLP and Bradley, Drendel & Jeanney to represent Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District in litigation for damages suffered from the actions of manufacturers, distributors and dispensers of opioid-based drugs, and to authorize the filing of actions against such entities. (All Commission Districts)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore stated legal counsel advised pulling Agenda Item 8 from the meeting.

**21-116F**      **AGENDA ITEM 9** International Association of Firefighters, Local 2487 Report.

Josh Kutz, President of the International Association of Firefighters, Local 2487, apologized for missing the meetings in May, adding staff was exhausted because of the mandatory situation going on. He noted the latest Captain's Exam had just been completed, resulting in a list of new people to promote if vacancies became available. Additionally, more recruits were coming out of the Academy which would help supplement firefighter staffing. He relayed that Local 2487 held the annual Guns and Hoses golf tournament with the Washoe County Sheriff's Office, raising almost \$30,000 for the Children's Cancer Foundation. He spoke about 18 Local 2487 members who helped with a Habitat for Humanity project over two weekends and commended Fire Captain Randall Gates for setting the partnership up. Mr. Kutz noted Deputy Fire Chief Alex Kukulus met regularly with members of the union's board, which he said improved communication.

Mr. Kutz noted the Truckee Meadows Firefighters Foundation would be the recipient of the June 17 50/50 raffle at the Reno Rodeo. He noted the foundation had donated \$23,000 to charitable causes through 2020, with another \$6,800 having been donated so far this calendar year. He hoped people would support the raffle at the Rodeo.

Chair Lucey thanked Mr. Kutz for the update and praised the work done by Local 2487 in terms of fundraising and community outreach. He hoped the upcoming fire season would not be nasty.

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

**21-117F**      **AGENDA ITEM 10** Awards and Recognition.  
~ Fire Chief's Letter of Commendation presented to Jet Plumbing  
~ Fire Chief's Medal of Commendation presented to David Kulak

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore said he wished to honor two civilians for their involvement in two separate incidents, one rescuing a canine and another saving a human life. He invited Melissa Audelo, Joey Diaz, and Kevin Jones of Jet Plumbing to the podium. He recalled the story of a beagle named Ginger who was trapped in a drainage pipe and displayed photos of the incident. He said Jet Plumbing cancelled paying jobs to help rescue the dog. With their assistance, they were

able to locate the dog and formulate a plan for rescue. He read the Letter of Commendation to Jet Plumbing. He indicated Animal Control Officer Brandon Vanassche initially suggested that the TMFPD get involved and, since he was unable to attend, Assistant Director of Regional Animal Services Robert Wooster was in attendance. Additionally, District Park Manager Bryan Harrower was the first to arrive on the scene, and he coordinated efforts.

Commissioner Jung thanked Jet Plumbing, noting they were her plumbers.

Chief Moore introduced Mr. David Kulak, a Marine Corps veteran and former drill instructor. He told the story of Mr. Kulak noticing a man face-down underneath a truck after the jack had failed. While his wife Carrie called 911, Mr. Kulak lifted the Chevy Tahoe enough to see the patient's chest still moving. He then called to others, including Mr. Kulak's family, to lift the vehicle enough to drag the victim out. The patient suffered cracked ribs, a punctured lung, and a cracked sternum, but his life was saved because of Mr. Kulak's actions. Chief Moore recognized Mr. Kulak and his wife with a Medal of Commendation.

Chair Lucey thanked the Chief and the Kulaks for sharing the story and commented it was rare to be able to call people heroes.

Mr. Kulak said he spoke to the patient a few days later, and the man still had his sense of humor.

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

**21-118F**      **AGENDA ITEM 11** Fire Chief Report.

- A. Informational briefing on operational matters and activities for the month of May and June 2021.
- B. Commissioner Dashboard: Status update on ongoing Commissioner Requests of the Fire Chief.
- C. Review of recent critical calls response statistics for April 2021 to include Mutual and Auto Aid for our regional partners.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore congratulated the fire crews who extinguished a fire the day before, which he said could have turned into another Rock Farm Fire had there been more wind. He thanked the Cities of Reno and Sparks for assisting. The cause was being investigated, he said, but he knew it started in a mobile home structure and spread to the wildlands. Access in the Logan Meadows area, he remarked, was difficult.

Chief Moore said the District's next initiative was the Master Plan, which would be a significant document for years to come; it was currently in draft form and he hoped to bring it to the Board in July. The Master Plan would be the comprehensive, guiding document as the TMFPD responded to growth. He wanted the Board's advice about issues they wanted the District to focus on, but one area of focus would be a revision

of the standards of cover. He recalled standards of cover had been used when the deployment analysis was performed that concluded the Silver Lake and Lemmon Valley areas were not well served. He recognized the TMFPD was getting busier in the I-80 corridor, and it was always busy in the north, so this analysis would help determine the appropriate location for all fire stations, both future and existing. He said the District also needed to study staffing levels, citing the long response time of the Hidden Valley Station to issues in the I-80 corridor. He stated the Master Plan would also address the expansion of the District's boundary, adding he was in discussions about serving the Gerlach and Red Rock areas. It would also consider the economic forecast of how to pay for improvements. He anticipated the planning process might include discussions about how better to respond with regional partners, whether through mutual aid, automatic aid, or something beyond that.

Chief Moore stated the use of volunteers was diminishing as many volunteers only had time to respond to emergency medical service and wildland fire calls; they could not find or train volunteers at an appropriate level to battle structure fires. Some volunteers felt they should bring support such as water to fight brush fires but not get involved with structure entry. Gerlach was the exception as both paid and volunteer firefighters handled structure fires. He mentioned they had engaged Eugenia Larmore, an economic forecaster, to ensure they would be financially healthy with the improvements they planned to make.

Commissioner Jung felt volunteers wanted to ride on the apparatus but did not want to train to pass the physical examinations, which could put all other personnel at risk. She stated volunteer firefighters never became professional firefighters because many worked on other professional careers or decided to volunteer after retirement. She felt they needed more volunteers who they could train, particularly in Gerlach. She said the idea of volunteerism was great, but they needed volunteers who were okay being told what to do. She said the Board of Fire Commissioners made the effort to fill the need in Commissioner Herman's district, but they also gave direction that volunteers were not a sustainable method. She referenced a prior quote made by Vice Chair Hartung that the lowest bid was not always the best bid, and that was why the Board made the decision to focus less on volunteers and more on the safety of first responders.

Commissioner Hill commended the Chief for considering regionalization as a big part of the plan, saying she looked forward to hearing recommendations.

Vice Chair Hartung asked whether the TMFPD stocked usable equipment in the Gerlach and Red Rock areas. Chief Moore said the equipment for those areas was County-owned and in good shape, though both areas had additional needs. Because of the distances involved in those areas, there was value in people giving a summary of what was happening at a scene or providing cardiopulmonary resuscitation on a patient. However, it was not achievable to have volunteers with the skillset of career firefighters in those areas. Vice Chair Hartung suggested possibly utilizing the Regional Aviation Enforcement Unit helicopter at the Reno-Stead Airport to transport crews to those areas where equipment would be waiting for them, a suggestion Chief Moore agreed the District should consider.

Chair Lucey inquired about how far along the District was in terms of the Master Plan, to which Chief Moore replied a strategic plan committee had been formed and the plan was essentially complete but needed to be refined graphically. Additionally, they needed feedback from the entire department before they returned to the Board. Chair Lucey brought up the prior volunteer discussion, agreeing with Commissioner Jung that young firefighters were no longer becoming volunteers; they were moving directly into the Academy or getting involved with the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority. The county was blended, encompassing rural, suburban, and metro areas, and he felt the District needed to consider the role of volunteers. He contended volunteers did not play as large a role in the south valleys as they did in the north. He thought discussions on this topic needed to take place. Chief Moore pointed out volunteers were not free because the District spent thousands of dollars on the program, yet the contributions of volunteers were fairly de minimis compared to the number of calls.

If there were no further questions about the other reports, Chief Moore said, he would let them stand as is.

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

**21-119F**     **AGENDA ITEM 12**     Recommendation to approve an Employment Agreement between Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District and Alex Kukulus, Deputy Chief, to extend the Contract term and to provide updated salary figures and holiday comp time payouts, and outline payment upon separation as outlined in Section 3 of the Agreement to be effective July 1, 2021 through July 31, 2023. (All Commission Districts)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore stated he was very pleased with Deputy Chief Alex Kukulus' work, describing him as the best deputy he had in his years as Chief.

Deputy Chief Kukulus stated he was honored to have the opportunity and he was proud of the organization. He said Chief Moore was one of the easiest chiefs to work for, and staff was the reason why the TMFPD was in such a great position. He thanked his division chiefs.

Chair Lucey indicated he was glad Deputy Chief Kukulus allowed the Board to take this item up for consideration. He said the Deputy Chief created quite a unit with the District, and he noted staff respected Deputy Chief Kukulus. He thanked him for his work, adding he worked tirelessly.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 12 be approved.



**21-120F**      **AGENDA ITEM 20** Recommendation to adopt a Resolution authorizing the issuance of the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District's General Obligation (Limited Tax) Capital Improvement Bonds (Additionally Secured by Pledged Revenues), Series 2021 in the maximum principal amount of \$7,000,000 to finance the acquisition of properties for stations and administration authorized by NRS 474.511, including fixtures, structures, stations, other buildings and sites therefor and appurtenances and incidentals necessary, useful or desirable for any such facilities, including all types of property therefor; and providing the effective date hereof. The proposal to issue these bonds was approved by the Washoe County Debt Management Commission per NRS 350.014 et. seq. on February 19, 2021. (All Commission Districts)

Cindy Vance, Chief Fiscal Officer for the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD), introduced John Peterson, Vice President of JNA Consulting Group, LLC, and Kendra Follett of Sherman & Howard.

Mr. Peterson said this item was a proposal for the TMFPD to issue \$7 million in capital improvement bonds to be used primarily for the acquisition of property on Barron Way. This was the last step in the process, and he reviewed the history of the bond item. When they presented to the Board in February, Mr. Peterson indicated, they were expecting an interest rate of 3.35 percent; the rate was now estimated to be 2.5 percent, resulting in an annual debt service of \$400,000 a year for 25 years. He remarked they requested a bond rating for the District, which he anticipated having within a couple of weeks. The bonds would then be sold via a competitive sale in July with the expectation that they would close by the end of July.

Chair Lucey thanked Mr. Peterson and Ms. Follett for their guidance on financial issues.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 20 be adopted. The Resolution for same is attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

**21-121F**      **AGENDA ITEM 13** Recommendation to authorize staff to contact Apple Inc. regarding development of a fire station pursuant to an ordinance and development agreement as stated in Ordinance Number 1476 dated October 25, 2011 and subsequently amended and restated on November 28, 2017, and authorize staff to consider timetables, conceptual plans and a schedule for occupancy. (Commission District 4)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore recalled the Board of County Commissioners approved a development agreement with Reno Industrial Park, which was sold to Apple. Included in that development agreement

was a commitment to build a fire station, and staff wanted to begin the process with Apple. He noted the call volume in the I-80 corridor was increasing and the station would be necessary not only to protect I-80, but to keep the Hidden Valley crew in their quarters since they were the ones who currently responded to calls in the corridor. He said Apple would have one year to develop conceptual plans and another year to develop actual plans and construct the facility. The TMFPD's commitment was to staff the station once it was ready, and staff was confident they would be able to do that.

Vice Chair Hartung asked about the footprint that Apple agreed to. Chief Moore responded that would be negotiated as conceptual plans were developed. The station would house a crew of four, contain two drive-through truck bays, and include support spaces like kitchens and restrooms.

Vice Chair Hartung thought the Board of Fire Commissioners should provide the Chief with direction, recommending the addition of one more bay which could possibly house a Bureau of Land Management brush truck. He said there were many new opportunities in the east I-80 area, and the needs of Wadsworth continued to grow. He pointed out over 100 acres in Wadsworth were approved for development, and another request was likely to occur which would change 600 more acres to residential development. He supported this item but wanted to ensure that the District built robustly enough to service that rapidly-growing area. He thought the station would serve them well in the future, even considering the potential of a lands bill and growth in that region.

Commissioner Jung said the Vice Chair played a large role in this item and she felt the he should be heavily involved with it. She stated Apple was the most profitable company in the world as of March 21, 2021, and she felt this would provide great branding opportunities for the fire station. She opined some of the money that was expected to come to the area from Purdue Pharma for the opioid settlement should be allocated to staff this fire station because one common factor in many deadly car accidents was the use of opioids. While opioids certainly impacted the homeless, those drugs affected all echelons of society. She commented Storey County had not yet received any taxes from Tesla and the Tahoe Reno Industrial Center, though they would begin receiving them when the 10-year exemption expired. She encouraged Vice Chair Hartung to work with Chief Moore on the addition of more bays and with Sparks City Mayor Ed Lawson on a public lands plan. She thought the additional fire station could ease traffic concerns on I-80 East past Lockwood because of the ability to respond to accidents quicker.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 13 be authorized.

**21-122F**      **AGENDA ITEM 19**    Recommendation to approve the Property and Liability Insurance and Workers' Compensation Insurance Proposal for the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District for one year beginning July 1, 2021 for a total annual premium not to exceed \$1,407,085 and authorize purchase of insurance based upon the Proposal. The Proposal includes Property, Casualty, Professional and Excess Liability Insurance to be provided by VFIS/American Alternative and will include Crime/Employee Theft Insurance through Travelers Bond & Specialty, Network Security/Privacy (AIG Specialty), and Workers' Compensation through 7710 Insurance Company. The Proposal also includes a three-year renewal term for Environmental Liability and Assault Expense and Threat Response to be provided by Great American E&S. (All Commission Districts)

Cindy Vance, Chief Fiscal Officer for the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD), said the proposal for annual renewals was 17 percent which, when added to a few three-year renewals, would increase the total value to \$1.4 million. She mentioned the summary would show the TMFPD's exposure, adding there had been increases both within the insurance market and the District as a whole. The auto liability increased by 11 percent to \$21,000, and workers' compensation and employers' liability grew by 16 percent to \$149,000. The highest percentage increase was in cybersecurity. She introduced Brandon Lewis of USI Insurance Services, LLC (USI).

Mr. Lewis noted there had been significant challenges in the insurance market due to several years of above-average catastrophic losses. Cyber markets in particular were stressed beyond measure with many insurers backing out of coverage and 300 to 500 percent increases in ransomware attacks. He said USI worked with the TMFPD's current insurer and other markets, but most cyber insurers would not consider insuring government entities. He indicated most liability rate increases were between 8 and 15 percent, but the District's current property and liability insurer committed to limiting their increases to between 7 and 8 percent. He reviewed the renewal coverage highlights included with the agenda, pointing out no changes had been made to most of the coverages. He added the last two items were three-year renewals which had been approved by the Board. He explained threat response coverage addressed instances where a threat was made against a fire station or the main office.

Vice Chair Hartung acknowledged there would be a \$270,000 insurance cost increase, but the TMFPD could not get by without insurance. He stated the Board wagered something bad would happen while the insurance company wagered it would not. He was relieved to see earthquake coverage was included because it would only be a matter of time before one occurred. He supported the item even with the stiff cost increase.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 19 be approved and authorized.

**21-123F**      **AGENDA ITEM 14** Recommendation to approve a month-to-month Interlocal Agreement between Washoe County on behalf of the Washoe County Sheriff's Office and the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District for dispatch services in an amount not to exceed \$109,374.41 per month, starting August 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. (All Commission Districts)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore noted the Sheriff was increasing fees for dispatch services by \$36,458 a month. This agreement would be a month-to-month interim agreement for dispatch services while other alternatives were being considered.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Vice Chair Hartung, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 14 be approved. The Interlocal Agreement for same is attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

**21-124F**      **AGENDA ITEM 15** Recommendation to accept a proposal from REMSA to provide dispatching services to Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District, in an annual amount, excluding initial up-front costs for software licensing and equipment, of approximately \$690,530, with annual increases of less than 2% that could rise to a total cost of \$710,473 per year if extended through a 5-year contract and direction to staff to negotiate an agreement for services that will commence no later than January 1, 2022. The agreement will be presented to Board for approval at a later date. (All Commission Districts)

Deputy Fire Chief Alex Kukulus indicated this had been a work in progress since the Sheriff's Office notified them of the rate change in January. He conducted a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk, and reviewed slides with the following titles: Current Washoe Dispatch/TMFR Arrangement; Washoe Dispatch- TMFP Annual Fees; Current EMS Dispatch Process; Dispatch Alternatives Analyzed; Stakeholder Involvement; Comparison of REMSA v. Reno Dispatch; Radio System Configuration; Mutual/Automatic Aid Requests; TIBURON; Implementation Plan; Of Note; Future Opportunities; Recommendation; and Questions.

Deputy Chief Kukulus noted the proposed dispatch process would cut the process for all medical calls in half. He said the option to remain with Washoe County Dispatch was not recommended both because of the increase in cost and the fact that that arrangement would not solve some other challenges they were experiencing. A contract with the City of Sparks was not feasible because that agency did not have the bandwidth to accommodate the increased volume. He said it was not cost-effective for the TMFPD to establish its own dispatch center to handle 11,000 calls a year. He broke down the stakeholders in greater detail, describing the types of involvement each had, and added that many discussions had also occurred with the Washoe County Sheriff's Office.

Deputy Chief Kukulus stated the \$588,346 in one-time equipment costs would be primarily for radio equipment and computer-aided dispatch (CAD) licensing; some of those items could even be reimbursed by the E911 Committee. He assumed any possible licensing costs that might come with the Reno Dispatch option would be nominal. He explained the 5 to 8 percent increase for the Reno Dispatch option was determined by researching Reno's increases in staffing costs for dispatchers. He said it was the District's intent to stay on the 800 MHz radio system, meaning there would be no disadvantage to utilizing the radio system of the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA). He intended to overcome REMSA's inexperience with fire dispatching by implementing a robust training program; REMSA anticipated having all staff that would work TMFPD channels trained on emergency fire dispatch, and many employees were already becoming proficient in TMFPD terminology. While RESMA's use of a different CAD than other agencies would be a negative, remaining on the current CAD would result in TMFPD staff not receiving important emergency medical dispatch information quickly.

Deputy Chief Kukulus pointed out the TMFPD did a lot of mutual and automatic aid with Storey County, but they were not on the same CAD as the TMFPD; Sparks had not been on the Tiburon CAD until a few years ago. He admitted sharing the same CAD was important and hoped to accomplish this with a regional CAD system. He noted Incline Village had been on the Tiburon CAD until last July, and they were now being dispatched by a center in Grass Valley, California. Law enforcement calls were routed through Washoe County's public safety answering points, and fire and emergency medical services (EMS) calls went to Grass Valley for proper routing. Calls in this new proposed plan would closely mirror that flow path. He reviewed an example of how it took more than five minutes to dispatch a TMFPD unit under the current dispatch system, even though all the agencies involved used the same CAD. He said the plan was to dedicate some TMFPD staff to work full-time on CAD programming and testing, and a liaison might continue to be embedded in RESMA's facility afterward.

Deputy Chief Kukulus remarked costs would continue to go up the longer the District remained in the month-to-month contract approved earlier in the meeting. Ownership of all purchased radio equipment and radio consoles would not only enhance the ability for E911 reimbursement, but it would also allow the District to move that equipment should there be a future change in the arrangement. He admitted a lead time of three to four months would be necessary to acquire some of the components needed to begin operations, so this needed to occur quickly to keep within the recommended time frame.

Aaron Abbott, Executive Director for REMSA, thanked the Board for allowing them to submit a proposal. He said REMSA operated a high-tech, high-performance dispatch center, reiterating they touched 85 percent of the calls the TMFPD responded to. He felt the proposal would improve interoperability, citing the benefits already achieved under the current response model between the two agencies. Among the benefits of the REMSA dispatch system were the ability to utilize automatic vehicle location (AVL) and the fact that their dispatch center was staffed with registered nurses, paramedics, and emergency medical technicians. He anticipated a seamless transition to

the 800 MHz radio system, allowing crosstalk between ambulances and fire engines who were responding to incidents.

Mr. Abbott indicated REMSA recently signed a contract with a vendor to provide secure video chat to the dispatch center for injury and hazard assessment; that vendor also provided device-based technology to locate the caller to within 30 feet, as well as a text option for the deaf and hard of hearing. He noted REMSA was working with the City of Reno on a new CAD to CAD (C2C) system and was waiting on the city to confirm whether they signed off on a new project. He confirmed they would cross-train all personnel in fire dispatching, though several staff members were already qualified to do so. The proposal included additional personnel and a 1/2 full-time equivalent position for quality assurance.

Division Chief Joe Kammann reiterated 85 percent of the calls received contained an EMS component; giving both ambulances and fire engines real time access to information and patient status updates would create serious efficiencies. He felt this was a good start in showing regional entities the possibility of cooperation.

Division Chief Chris Ketring said the County's Radio Communications team already vetted the equipment that would be needed to maintain the TMFPD' 800 MHz system. Research was also done to ensure they had what they needed in terms of station paging, the alert system used by stations after 911 calls were dispatched. He summarized several aspects of the plan which would remain the same under the new plan, including multi-engine response and the channels used for automatic and mutual aid. He expected one TMFPD staff member to work in REMSA's dispatch center for between six months and a year to help create and modify dispatch policies, train staff, and coordinate incident response with supervisorial staff. He spoke about the steps taken to speed up the transition to satisfy all agencies involved with large incident responses. He pointed out the District had been in a similar place in 2012 when transitioning to Washoe County Dispatch, so he felt any issues could be overcome.

Dean Dow, President and Chief Executive Officer of REMSA, believed the work these groups did in exploring efficiencies and operations was solid. He said this showed a good deal of cooperation and he was 100 percent supportive of the effort.

Chief Moore said the first recommendation for dispatch in 2012 came from a Washoe County Health District-commissioned study, and the major recommendation was to fix dispatch to address communication issues between the TMFPD and REMSA. Studies took place in 2016 and 2019, the latter concluding Reno and REMSA Dispatch should be merged. He indicated this item would achieve the same thing and it was supported by three studies. He acknowledged two things that were needed to make dispatch work were a common CAD system and a commitment to communicating if one agency was closer to an emergency. He provided an example of a recent accident that was not addressed as efficiently as possible due to the current dispatch system. He felt ashamed that a call took five minutes between two agencies who were in the same room, and he described this item as a first step in trying to rectify the situation in a positive way.

Vice Chair Hartung inquired about the lifespan of the equipment purchased by the TMFPD. Deputy Chief Kukulus said the primary consoles lasted between five and ten years, though failures could happen earlier. There was no anticipated need to replace the current equipment, even if they moved to another CAD system. A C2C system involved taking information from one database and translating it to another database. When asked about AVL, he stated locations did populate on maps in the Tiburon system, but the CAD was not programmed to utilize that information to send the closest resource. The current system selected what it thought were the closest units based on predetermined scripts whereas REMSA's CAD got the real-time locations of closest units. He provided the scenario of a fire truck en route to a training exercise as an example of the failures of the current system's location aspect; the system would not select that unit even if it was closest because it was not expected to be there.

Commissioner Hill asked for clarification about a letter received from the Reno City Fire Chief and the Reno City Manager about the financial implications of partnering with a private organization through the E911 Advisory Board. Deputy Chief Kukulus disclosed he sat on the E911 Committee. He stated he had reached out to the District Attorney's Office to opine on the TMFPD or REMSA receiving E911 reimbursements. Effectively, there was no restriction on private versus public entities. The TMFPD was a public entity that planned to purchase and own all the equipment. He added it was not a foregone conclusion that the Committee would recommend that. This type of equipment would typically receive reimbursement and he was optimistic that would be the case. Ultimately, he concluded, the Committee was just an advisory board, and the decision would rest with the Board of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Jung stated E911 funds did not capture the scope of funding because cell phone numbers were not taken into account. She insisted the E911 fund was de minimis, though it would be more significant if Voice over Internet Protocol numbers were included. She was glad the District Attorney went on record as saying they interpreted the law differently. She said the TMFPD was expanding, and regionalization was not something they needed. She reminded everyone she had been against deconsolidation, recalling predictions which did not come true that the District would be rendered bankrupt because of annexation. She stated this Board, Chief, and District were the best in the region and would not be threatened by any partners' speculation of the future.

Commissioner Jung remarked she was ready to move forward on this to free up the Chief and legal counsel, who the County needed to pay. She pointed out they had been discussing C2C and AVL for fourteen years even though enacting these would only require a switch to be flipped. She said the biggest complaint she received from her constituents about fire service was the length of response time for EMS calls. Every study that had been commissioned drew a correlation between the age of a victim and the speed with which a medical emergency was addressed. She quoted Commissioner Hill's belief that citizens wanted the Board to try something rather than nothing, and she thought now was the time to do so; discussing C2C and AVL for 14 years was not working.

On the call for public comment, Mr. Thomas Daly said dispatch was about service delivery and citizens wanted the closest available unit to reach them in the shortest time; AVL provided dispatchers with the option to send the closest unit. He said CAD programs provided seamless dispatch for neighboring jurisdictions when automatic or mutual aid was needed. He stated REMSA's proposal would provide for both enhancements without the need to send calls back and forth between different dispatchers, all at a lower cost. He urged the Board to approve the item.

Chair Lucey indicated the next speaker, Mr. Dan Tapia, would receive five minutes because he was representing a large number of individuals.

Mr. Tapia, President of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) Local 731, said he was speaking on behalf of 270 firemen who opposed this proposal. He said the problem was not with REMSA and opined the system was broken; delays in the relay of information caused safety issues. He told a story of being dispatched to a motel which he entered before being informed it was an armed assault situation. He mentioned every study recommended the consolidation of dispatch and he would love to see REMSA involved with that. He indicated all fire labor unions stood united in opposition, meaning 500 workers in the field opposed the proposal. He believed this move would make the failing system even worse and would cause loss of life and property. He noted the Board's mission statement included working regionally, which he questioned based on this proposal. He opined the best fire department in the area was when the TMFPD and the Reno Fire Department were one unit. He repeated his belief that all agencies, including REMSA, needed to work together regionally.

Chair Lucey noted Mr. Josh Kutz, President of IAFF Local 2487, would also be given five minutes to speak.

Mr. Kutz asked the Board to continue this item so the union had adequate time to review what the administration had agreed to. He acknowledged Local 2487 was briefed weekly on a potential dispatch agreement but had not received any documentation. He had been told the union was not involved in discussions out of fear it could scare RESMA away. He expressed concern that a private entity might be scared away by the 152 firefighters in the union, particularly because they would be working directly with them. He mentioned the union had not been approached to discuss the City of Reno's offer, and the process was moving too fast to allow them the opportunity to review the options. He said they owed it to the citizens to provide the best frontline response.

Mr. Jim Reid, Fire Chief for the Sparks Fire Department, said he attended the meeting because this decision could impact his dispatch center. He requested a delay in the vote so discussions could occur about mutual aid processes between his agency and the TMFPD. He noted the two agencies worked great together and he wanted the system worked out before moving forward; all discussions should have dispatchers' input, he felt.

Mr. Dave Cochran, Fire Chief for the Reno Fire Department, said he understood the need to consider alternatives. He stated no one reached out to either Reno



Fire or Reno Dispatch about this process, and he wanted to ensure the Board knew the information presented did not come from those agencies. He said safety was the service being provided, and negative outcomes always included some element of a communication breakdown. He felt this system would introduce communication problems into everyday operations. He stated C2C would not work. He thought moving to a different CAD and radio system would result in further delays, including in situations where law enforcement would be needed. He requested additional research and discussion with all stakeholders, including dispatch.

Mr. Chris Crawforth, Chief of Police for the Sparks Police Department, asked that the Board continue this item. While he had no preference about the final decision, he wanted the chance to resolve issues. He expressed concern about lag times with REMSA and wanted to ensure his dispatchers would not take on the brunt of the work.

Mr. Tom Dunn, District Vice President for the Professional Firefighters of Nevada, indicated he was speaking on behalf of the 3,000 members and 22 locals in Nevada. He said he was a paid professional firefighter who provided services to the City of Reno and the TMFPD for 20 years, and he was a resident of unincorporated Washoe County. He reviewed the results of a series of studies which concluded there was a need to consolidate emergency dispatch operations. He recommended tabling the item so input could be gathered from all regional partners.

Vice Chair Hartung voiced respect for everyone in the room and acknowledged that the issue of regional dispatch would not be solved by this, regardless of whether the decision was made to partner with the City of Reno or with RESMA. He emphasized the need for a single dispatch for all agencies, which this agreement did not address. He asked about the timeline and what would happen if this item were to be approved. Deputy Chief Kukulius said the purpose of this item was to receive direction from the Board, reminding them that no legal agreement was before them for approval; he hoped to return with one in July. He disagreed with the assertion that had been made that certain agencies were not informed of this, pointing out he met with the Reno Fire Department monthly and they had been aware of this since March. Addressing offramps, he said any concerns could be addressed for inclusion in the final agreement. They would not initiate the agreement with REMSA until everyone was satisfied.

Commissioner Hill said she appreciated the Vice Chair's questions, which clarified there was still time to incorporate regional partners. She believed the opportunity to work regionally was still an option. She expressed concern both that the Board did not receive a copy of the City of Reno's offer and about the statement made by the union regarding a lack of coordination. Bringing up the Sheriff's costs, she indicated she spoke with the Sheriff who informed her the \$1.3 million cost was always there and the Board of County Commissioners had been supplementing some of it. She expressed willingness to support this item knowing there was a chance for regional work later.

Chair Lucey said the Board needed to make a change because of the increase of costs at the Sheriff's Office, which was caused by an agreement with the City of Reno

pertaining to the crime lab no longer being in effect. She said the Board would continue to be bold in ensuring the County paid for its services; handshake deals would no longer suffice. He lauded Deputy Chief Kukulus and Mr. Abbott for having discussions based on the situation that was thrust upon them. He agreed this was not an end solution, but it showed the Board was moving forward with something; it could be fixed later if it were found not to work. He respected the opinions of those who felt this move was not necessary, but he evaluated the budget and made decisions in the best interest of his constituents. He felt this was a smart move and looked forward to reviewing the contract, adding all the individuals in the room were willing to participate in an open discussion. He opined people did not have open minds during the initial separation of the two fire agencies.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Chair Lucey, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that the proposal be accepted to provide services for the District, including up-front cost, with the caveat that offramps be included in the agreement; further, the agreement would need to commence no later than January 1, 2022.

**21-125F**      **AGENDA ITEM 16** Recommendation to authorize the Fire Chief, or his designee, to identify and purchase necessary equipment, software, and associated costs for new radio systems in an amount not to exceed \$300,000, through adopted purchasing provisions. (All Commission Districts)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Vice Chair Hartung, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 16 be authorized.

**21-126F**      **AGENDA ITEM 17** Recommendation to approve and create two separate contract funded positions as of July 1, 2021 to include one newly created job classification and salary range for a Fire Management Officer at \$91,852.80 - \$119,600.00 with Regular Nevada Public Employees' Retirement System with Regular NV PERS categorization and one additional Heavy Equipment Operator Position with a range of \$55,806.40 - \$72,113.60 with Regular NV PERS categorization. (All Commission Districts)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Hill, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 17 be approved and created.

**21-127F**      **AGENDA ITEM 18** Recommend authorizing the payment of up-front expenses in a total amount not to exceed \$500,000 for the purchase of one (1) F-250 Command Vehicle and three (3) new F-550 Command Tow Vehicles with vendor to be determined. These upfront costs will be reimbursed under the Hazardous Fuels Management and Standby Services

Agreement with NV Energy for fire suppression and project work. (All Commission Districts)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 18 be authorized.

**21-128F**      **AGENDA ITEM 21** Recommendation to approve Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Resolution TM12-2021 to augment the district's Fiscal Year 2020-21 General Fund in the amount of \$3,000,000 and Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Resolution TM13-2021 to augment the district's Fiscal Year 2020-21 Emergency Fund in the amount of \$700,000 and direct the District to make the appropriate budget adjustments. (All Commission Districts)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore indicated the purpose of this item was to true up the costs received from NV Energy to pay for its fuel program. He introduced Cindy Vance, Chief Fiscal Officer for the TMFPD.

Ms. Vance recalled the District took a conservative approach when budgeting for Fiscal Year 2021. She noted revenues did not come in as expected and there had been additional expenses in dealing with the pandemic. The final augmentation trueed up the expenses under two contracts and the three positions that opened as a result of a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response grant. The TMFPD used its contingency fund to cover salaries and benefits for use of the ambulance. Additionally, she stated, this addressed the emergency fund, from which \$1.8 million was spent, up significantly from \$527,000 the prior year. She remarked March's consolidated tax allocation was \$955,000, a 43 percent increase over the prior year, which was a much greater return than anticipated.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Hill, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 21 be approved and directed. The Resolutions for same are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

**21-129F**      **AGENDA ITEM 22** Announcements/Reports.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore said the District administered 3,300 vaccines in their pods. Chair Lucey praised them for their work.

**21-130F**      **AGENDA ITEM 23** Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

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**12:57 p.m.** There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

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**BOB LUCEY**, Chair  
Truckee Meadows Fire  
Protection District

ATTEST:

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

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