



TRUCKEE MEADOWS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

STAFF REPORT

Board Meeting Date: January 21, 2020

DATE: January 14, 2020

TO: Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Board of Fire Commissioners

FROM: Charles A. Moore, Fire Chief
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SUBJECT: Continuation of discussions from the September 17, 2019 presentation of the Deployment Plan and possible direction to staff regarding the deployment plan that includes new locations of existing and future district fire stations and firefighting personnel including:

1. Possible consolidation of stations 30 (Bowers) and Station 32 (Eastlake).in the Washoe Valley area of the County.
2. Options for re-deployment of firefighting personnel.
3. Cost analysis of deployment options and Timeline.
4. Review of Ad-Valorem revenues.
5. Review of REMSA response zones.
6. Review of Wildfire Risk.
7. Mutual and Automatic Aid improvements with Carson City.

(All Commission Districts) FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

SUMMARY

This item is a continuation of discussions from the September 17, 2019 presentation of the Deployment Plan and possible direction to staff regarding a deployment plan that includes new locations of district fire stations and firefighting personnel including:

1. Possible consolidation of stations 30 (Bowers) and Station 32 (Eastlake) in the washoe valley area of the County.
2. Options for re-deployment of firefighting personnel.
3. Cost analysis of deployment options and timeline.
4. Review of ad-valorem revenues.
5. Review of REMSA response zones.
6. Review of Wildfire Risk.
7. Mutual and Automatic Aid improvements with Carson City.

At the presentation on September 17, 2019 and December 17, 2019 Board of Fire Commissioners meeting, individual Commissioners requested additional information regarding the Deployment Plan that proposes to consolidate two fire stations in Washoe Valley and develop fire stations in the northern battalion that would serve to align response time to a level established in the Regional Standards of Cover adopted by the Board in 2011.

PREVIOUS ACTION

In 2011 the Board of Fire Commissioners and Board of County Commissioners adopted a Regional Standard of Cover. That document defined response time standards and goals.

June 18, 2019, The Board of Fire Commissioners received a report from Heather Kerwin and the Fire Chief that discussed the methodology of the deployment plan study.

September 17, 2019, the Board heard a presentation regarding the Deployment Plan and directed staff to engage the public with community meetings. Four meetings were held as follows:

1. October 4, 2019 at Washoe Valley Alliance
2. November 4, 2019 at Tamarack Junction attended by approximately 50.
3. November 11, 2019 at Franktown Estates HOA, attended by approximately 20.
4. November 12, 2019 at Toiyabe Golf Course Clubhouse attended by 90 people.

The Board receives regular monthly reports as to call volume by location and incident type.

BACKGROUND

Staff performed an analysis of incident type and volume, per station for years 2015 – 2018. The analysis shows that 75% of incidents occur in the northern portion of the District and 25% in the South. The numbers of fire stations in the north and south is inverted as to call volume. The south district has one more fire station than the north. In addition, the north district experiences more incidents that require a longer operational period to stabilize and extinguish. In addition, three stations in the south district have a very low volume of emergency responses.

The north district can benefit from additional resources and the most practical way of accomplishing this in the short term is to rebalance existing resources. The Deployment Plan team systematically reviewed many factors to identify gaps and search for opportunities to improve service for most of the district and propose potential solutions to increase efficiency.

The Deployment Plan recommends changes in fire station locations and recommends changes in the distribution and concentration of District resources by determining what gaps currently exist and what resources are required for the future based on growth and possible future call volume.

The following is a discussion of additional information requested by Commissioners, and a discussion of a timeline of deployment options:

Items 1 & 2:

The difference of total aggregate call volume between the southern and northern battalions is expected to increase.

Staff initiated a study, attached as (Attachment A) that indicates most of the District's growth will occur north of I-80. The final report will be presented in March 2020. With 75% of the calls now occurring in the north, staff expects the delta between north and south battalions to increase.

Staff has contracted with Ekay Economic Consultants to study future growth in the District. They have prepared a study, (currently in draft form), that indicates additional growth in the District will occur in the north, with very limited growth in the south. Development is a simple predictor of future call volume because population drive calls for service. The draft document is included in this staff report as Attachment A – Five-Year Revenue and Expenditure Projections.

In the deployment plan, staff considered the most efficient and practical way to rebalance resources and align those resources to call demand. If Washoe Valley stations 30 Bowers and 32 Eastlake are consolidated, the District would move the excess personnel to the north and add one firefighter per shift to the Washoe Valley station to increase the crew size from 3 to 4. Initially, the excess staff of 2 firefighters per shift would staff a 2-person squad at Sun Valley / Spanish Springs.

The timeline to construct a consolidated Washoe Valley station is 2 years or January 2022. The 2-person squad would remain in service at Sun Valley / Spanish Springs until Silver Lake and Lemmon Valley Stations are placed into service.

When there is a need to staff Silver Lake and Lemmon Valley, then, personnel from the squad would move up to staff the additional station at Lemmon Valley. The estimated time range for the need for Silver Lake and Lemmon Valley is 2024-2025. In this scheme, there would be a need to hire 3 additional employees, rather than 9.

Item 3:

Under the Deployment Plan, adding a station in the north would cost \$600,000 versus \$1,800,000 in a status quo scheme.

The cost to staff a station is approximately \$1.8 million. This includes salary, benefits, overtime for 9 employees where stations are staffed with three, and service and supplies of approximately \$300,000. Service and supplies include station utilities, minor repairs, fuel, tires and other support costs.

In Washoe Valley (Bowers and Eastlake) 18 firefighters are required to staff both stations 24/7. (3 firefighters per shift x three shifts x two stations).

In the Deployment Plan, Washoe Valley consolidated station would require 12 firefighters (4 firefighters per shift x 3 shifts). This leaves 6 firefighters to initially deploy to the north. A squad of 2 firefighters x 3 shifts would be staffed by the 6 firefighters.

When the need to staff Silver Lake and Lemmon Valley becomes necessary, the staffing complement will need to be increased by only 1 firefighter per shift for a total of 3 firefighters. This would happen by moving Stead personnel to Silver Lake, and the move the Sun Valley Squad plus 3 new-hire firefighters to a new Lemmon Valley fire station.

Conversely, if staffing and deployment remain status quo, this deployment scheme would require 12 additional firefighters.

To quantify the cost in simple terms, $\frac{2}{3}$ rd of the cost of one of the Washoe Valley fire stations become available to re-deploy. (\$1.8 million x $\frac{2}{3}$ rd equals \$1.2 million of reduced cost.) The amount is available no matter how the Board chooses to add capacity or deploy resources in the future – and it is available each year. In 10 years, the cost reduction equals \$12 million.

Item 4:

Review of Ad-Valorem Revenues.

The Board requested assessed valuation data for the study areas.

A table of assessed valuations of Washoe Valley and Silver Lake and Lemmon Valley are attached as Attachment B.1 and B.2. Neither community generates the revenue to pay the costs for staffing a fire station. Washoe Valley generates approximately \$1.6 million before abatements. The operational cost of staffing two stations in Washoe Valley is approximately \$3,600,000.

Assessed values in Silver Lake and Lemmon Valley are less. No future growth estimate was made and both maps represent data as of October 2019.

Item 5:

Review of REMSA Response Zones.

The Board requested data on REMSA response zones in Washoe Valley. These response time zones are included and labeled as Attachment C.

REMSA has stated that they intend to place an ambulance at the consolidated station.

Item 6:

Review of Wildfire Risk.

This information was requested by the Board and is included as Attachment D. Wildfire risk in Washoe Valley is generally high, as are areas in Silver Knolls and some portions of Lemmon Valley.

Item 7:

Mutual and Automatic Aid improvements with Carson City.

Automatic aid between TMFPD and Carson City Fire has been agreed to in principle. An important element to improve dispatch communications is a CAD to CAD link. This link will significantly reduce the time it takes initiate mutual and automatic aid response. The software for this link is approximately \$100,000. It works for both law enforcement and fire response. For Washoe County's share, this improvement can be funded by the 911 Board.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to receiving the presentation and report – however there are potential fiscal impacts to implementing recommendations contained therein that include expanding service to the north battalion at a reduced cost than if the staffing scheme remains status quo.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board accept the presentation and give possible direction to staff.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation a possible motion would be:

"I move to accept the presentation and direct staff to prepare recommendations for consolidation of station 30 Bowers and station 32 Eastlake."