



WASHOE COUNTY

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: July 12, 2022

DATE: June 23, 2022

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Dave Solaro, Assistant County Manager
775-328-3624, dsolaro@washoecounty.gov

THROUGH: Eric Brown, County Manager

SUBJECT: Recommendation to approve an Interlocal Agreement pursuant to NRS 277.180 between Washoe County, a political subdivision of the State of Nevada, and the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe of Nevada, a sovereign, federally recognized Indian Tribe, for the Tribe to provide emergency response services--including but not limited to appropriate fire, paramedic, and paramedic transport services-- to the Gerlach area of Washoe County effective upon approval by the Pyramid Lake Tribal Council, for an initial term of five-years, with possible two-year extensions. If approved, this agreement will include provisions allowing the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe of Nevada fire agency to use certain Washoe County facilities and equipment in the Gerlach area in connection with services rendered under this agreement. [Approximate annual cost to the county of \$552,303.09.] (Commission District 5.).

SUMMARY

Within Unincorporated Washoe County there are four emergency service providers, North Lake Tahoe Fire (Incline Village area), Truckee Meadows Fire Rescue (south of township 22), Pyramid Lake Fire Rescue/EMS (Pyramid Lake tribal lands), and Washoe County Fire Services (north of township 22). Washoe County Fire Services provide emergency response services north of Township 22, which includes the Gerlach area.

The Board of County Commissioners (Board) is being asked to approve an Interlocal Agreement with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe (Tribe) to provide 24 hour per day, 7 day per week emergency response on behalf of Washoe County to the Gerlach area.

NRS 277.180 provides that any one or more public agencies may contract with any one or more other public agencies to perform any governmental service, activity or undertaking which any of the contracting agencies is authorized by law to perform.

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Fiscal Sustainability

PREVIOUS ACTION

March 19, 2019, the Board of Fire Commissioners had a discussion and accepted a report by Mike Brown of R&R Partners related to the provision of fire services in Gerlach.

June 19, 2018, the Board of Fire Commissioners heard a staff presentation on the possible expansion of Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District's boundary to include areas of

AGENDA ITEM # _____

Palomino Valley and Rancho Haven/ Red Rock as requested by Commissioner Berkbigler.

September 18, 2018, the Board of Fire Commissioners heard a staff presentation regarding possible Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) boundary adjustment to include Gerlach.

BACKGROUND

Washoe County Fire Services provides emergency response services north of Township 22 within Washoe County. This area begins roughly 19 miles north of Interstate 80 and extends to the Oregon border. The service in Gerlach is provided utilizing a model whereby two 40 hour per week employees, a Fire Protection Officer, and several intermittent hourly positions provide basic emergency response in conjunction with the Gerlach Volunteer Fire Department, Inc., a domestic nonprofit corporation.

Washoe County currently struggles to employ the two Fire Protection Officers and is in need of a new solution to provide emergency response services in the Gerlach area. With the assistance of Truckee Meadows Fire Rescue, a discussion with the Pyramid Lake Fire Rescue/EMS has created a possible path forward with a cooperative agreement for the purpose of providing the following:

- I. Provide 2 Firefighter (EMT-A or Paramedic) 24 hours per day, 365 days per year located in Gerlach to perform initial fire and emergency medical services response to incidents in accordance with Pyramid Lake Fire Rescue standard operating guidelines. This includes Tribal management oversight of all employees.
- II. Provide ground ambulance transport or coordinate Care Flight transport as appropriate.
- III. Coordinate with the Gerlach Volunteer Fire Department for assistance with recruitment and training of new volunteers.
- IV. Coordinate with Truckee Meadows Fire and Rescue as needed for logistics/supply and oversight of mutual aid agreements.
- V. Retain all revenue from 3rd party billing agency Andres Medical & Fire Recovery USA, ambulance saver subscriptions, and Community Paramedicine services.
- VI. Submit for grant opportunities as appropriate for necessary equipment, supplies, apparatus, fire prevention, training, etc.

In exchange for these services Washoe County will provide:

- I. Pay Pyramid Lake Fire Rescue salary and benefit costs of five full time equivalent personnel plus the Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost rate as established yearly (current rate 22.06% through calendar year 2022) with a 5% salary increase per the Tribe's current personnel and human resources policies each year of the agreement as outlined in Exhibit B.
- II. Provide use of the apparatus currently operated in Gerlach.
- III. Provide use of the Washoe County owned living quarters at 405 Short Street, Gerlach.
- IV. Provide use of the Fire Station at 420 Cottonwood Street, Gerlach.
- V. Pay Pyramid Lake Fire and Rescue \$19,000 for operational supplies, licenses and permit fees, uniforms and special clothing costs.
- VI. Provide direct vendor payment of utilities, phones, internet at the Gerlach properties in the amount of \$22,500.
- VII. Provide \$35,000 towards dispatch services through Washoe County Sheriff's Office.

- VIII. Provide grant writing assistance for grants submitted for Gerlach Fire.
- IX. Provide GIS services through Washoe County GIS for adjustment of service areas associated with the agreement.
- X. Provide one time printing costs for updated map books not to exceed \$2,500.00.

The Gerlach community, through its Citizens Advisory Board, supports this proposed arrangement as defined in the attached letter dated February 17, 2022.

The agreement term is for 5 years with 2-year extensions and includes possible termination with 120 day written notice by either party. This agreement will provide the citizens of Gerlach with full time dedicated staffing. With a proposed start date upon approval of this agreement by the Pyramid Lake Tribal Council. Washoe County Manger's Office and the Tribe will determine an acceptable level of service with the available budget and staff resources to provide limited service in Gerlach until full staffing is achieved.

This agreement would eliminate 2.4 Full Time Equivalent positions, it will reduce the staff time associated with management of the employees and intermittent staff and will increase emergency response services in the northern portion of Unincorporated Washoe County.

The Board does not need to enter into this agreement as recommended by staff. The other option for the Board is to continue recruiting and training 40 hour per week staff to provide coverage in the Gerlach area.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this agreement is \$547,048.09 for year one, the calendar year is utilized for the fiscal year of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe; therefore, a salary adjustment will be necessary in January 2023 and an adjustment of the indirect cost (currently 22.06%) as provided by the Tribe.

In FY22 Washoe County budgeted a total of \$366,325.60 for emergency response services in Gerlach. It is anticipated that in addition to \$547,048.09 for the services provided by the Tribe, Washoe County will continue to budget \$22,500 for utilities, equipment maintenance, fuel, and facility maintenance. An increase in costs was approved as an above base budget by the Board for FY23 to provide funding for this service.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board Recommendation to approve a Cooperative Agreement between Washoe County, a political subdivision of the State of Nevada, and the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe of Nevada, a sovereign, federally recognized Indian Tribe to provide emergency response services to the Gerlach area of Washoe County effective upon approval by the Pyramid Lake Tribal Council, for an initial term of five-years, with two-year extensions upon agreement of the parties

POSSIBLE MOTION

If the Board agrees with the staff recommendation a possible motion would be "Move to approve a Cooperative Agreement between Washoe County, a political subdivision of the

State of Nevada, and the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe of Nevada, a sovereign, federally recognized Indian Tribe to provide emergency response services to the Gerlach area of Washoe County effective upon approval by the Pyramid Lake Tribal Council, for an initial term of five-years, with two-year extensions upon agreement of the parties.”