

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

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

OCTOBER 6, 2020

PRESENT:

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

Jan Galassini, Chief Deputy County Clerk
Charles Moore, Fire Chief
Mary Kandaras, Deputy District Attorney

ABSENT:

Bob Lucey, Chair

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:

Vice Chair Berkbigler assumed the gavel in Chair Lucey's absence.

20-134F AGENDA ITEM 3 Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

20-135F AGENDA ITEM 4 Announcements/Reports.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore stated Agenda Item 12 would be heard after the Consent Agenda, and Agenda Item 14 would be pulled. He shared that former TMFPD Fire Chief Ray Brunstrom had passed away during the month of September 2020, and a moment of silence was observed.

Commissioner Hartung inquired about the recent 911 service outage experienced in Washoe County, asking if there was an alternative way for residents to reach emergency services in the event of a future outage. He said he would bring the subject up at the next Board of County Commissioners meeting.

Commissioner Jung wanted to know more about the emergency alert system, including who oversaw broadcasts and how determinations were made as to which residents would receive alerts. She wondered whether alerts went out to all cell phones in an affected area during an emergency.

AGENDA ITEM #5A

OCTOBER 6, 2020

PAGE 1

CONSENT ITEMS – 5A through 5E

- 20-136F** **5A** Recommendation to approve the meeting minutes from the September 1, 2020 Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting. (All Commission Districts)
- 20-137F** **5B** Recommendation to amend the Employment Agreement between Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District and Alex Kukulus, Deputy Chief, to provide “Call Back-Pay” or “Compensatory Time” when Deputy Chief Kukulus is required to respond to emergency situations outside of his 40-hour workweek. Any “Compensatory Time” or “Call-Back Pay” must be authorized by the Fire Chief. This Amendment shall be effective retroactively to July 1, 2020. (All Commission Districts)
- 20-138F** **5C** Recommendation to amend the Employment Agreement between Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District and Dale Way, Deputy Chief, to provide “Call Back-Pay” or “Compensatory Time” when Deputy Chief Way is required to respond to emergency situations outside of his 40-hour workweek. Any “Compensatory Time” or “Call-Back Pay” must be authorized by the Fire Chief. This Amendment shall be effective retroactively to July 1, 2020. (All Commission Districts)
- 20-139F** **5D** Recommendation to approve an increase in the salary range for the Chief Fiscal Officer (CFO) job classification from \$85,800-\$111,508 to \$102,960 - \$133,810 and authorize a 10% salary adjustment from \$111,508 to \$122,659 for the current CFO retroactively to July 1, 2020 based on the recommendations of the Korn Ferry/Hay Group, which was engaged to perform an analysis of the scope of the CFO’s current job duties and pay data to ensure the recommended range is fair when compared to similar positions. (All Commission Districts.)
- 20-140F** **5E** Recommendation to acknowledge the communications and reports received by the Washoe County Clerk on behalf of the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District’s Board of Fire Commissioners, included in the category “Additional Documents”. (All Commission Districts)

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

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Chair Lucey absent, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 5A through 5E be approved.

AGENDA ITEM 12 Recommendation to adopt a Resolution authorizing the issuance of General Obligation (Limited Tax) Capital Improvement Bonds (Additionally Secured by Pledged Revenues) in the maximum principal amount of \$2,100,000 to defray wholly or in part the cost of acquisition of properties for stations 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. The proposal to issue these bonds was approved by the Washoe County Debt Management Commission per NRS 350.014 et. seq. on February 28, 2020. (All Commission Districts)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore introduced John Peterson of JNA Consulting Group, LLC, who provided a summary of the District's proposal to issue bonds up to \$2.1 million. Mr. Peterson explained the process had begun in January 2020 and several steps had since been completed, including receiving approval from the Debt Management Commission to issue the bonds. Prior to the meeting, the TMFPD sent requests to 32 different banks for proposals for 15-year and 20-year financing options. There had been four proposals returned for the 15-year option and five for the 20-year option; Mr. Peterson recommended the Board choose the 15-year amortization option from Zions Bank, which offered a fixed interest rate for the life of the bond and an annual debt service of \$157,000. If selected, he said, the lower interest rate would save the District almost \$300,000 in interest versus the 20-year option. He concluded the proposal review process had been thorough and competitive, and he expressed appreciation for the work of Chief Moore and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Cindy Vance.

Commissioner Hartung noted Mr. Peterson had stated "bonds up to \$2.1 million", and the Commissioner requested clarification on whether there was a possibility the bonds would be less than \$2.1 million. Mr. Peterson apologized for his choice of wording. He clarified his recommendation was for the District to accept the full \$2.1 million in bonds. Chief Moore added that approximately \$1.5 million would be allocated for Station 37 and \$500,000 for the land reimbursement to the District.

Chief Deputy County Clerk Jan Galassini noted changes had been made to the Resolution for Agenda Item 12; the updated document had been posted online and distributed to the Board, and it would be placed on the record.

Commissioner Jung praised the work of Ms. Vance, saying she had fully supported the CFO's recent raise because she had done an excellent job managing the District's financial affairs.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Chair Lucey absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 12 be adopted. The Resolution pertinent to Agenda Item 12 is attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

19-142F **AGENDA ITEM 6** Awards and recognition of Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Personnel: Golden Axe Award – Captain Derek Reid; Veterans of Foreign War National Firefighter of the Year Award – Captain Derek Reid.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore presented Captain Derek Reid with the Golden Axe Award, explaining Captain Reid had proven himself to be a leader and would soon be promoted to Battalion Chief. Chief Moore discussed the stresses faced by first responders and thanked Captain Reid for his work with the District's peer support program, along with Chaplain Misty Reid and resident Clinical Psychologist Steven Nicholas.

Captain Reid stated it was his honor to serve those who served the community. He thanked Chief Moore, Chaplain Misty Reid, and Dr. Nicholas for their assistance with the peer support program, saying it had been a group effort.

Vice Chair Berkbigler and Commissioner Hartung commended Captain Reid's work. Commissioner Hartung discussed the expansion of the peer support program to all first responders in the region, including emergency room physicians and staff.

Captain Reid said hospital professionals as well as active and retired military members were welcomed, though the military had its own established support programs. He also noted the Las Vegas Fire Department had recently joined the peer support network, which was growing to become a statewide initiative.

Commissioner Hartung offered to introduce Captain Reid to military veterans Shane Whitecloud and Boone Cutler, whose podcast could be a potential outlet for promoting the peer support network.

Commissioner Jung congratulated Captain Reid on a job well done and brought up stress, trauma, and suicide rates among firefighters and other rescue workers. She thought it wonderful that Chaplain Misty Reid had been brought onto the team. She recognized that, as Captain Reid's wife, Ms. Reid also carried much of the burden of her husband's public service. She thanked them both for being there to help others, and she hoped the more support staff had, the better their outcomes would be. Vice Chair Berkbigler said residents were blessed to have such great team of first responders in the community.

Chief Moore introduced Service Officer Scott Wilcox of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) post in Verdi, Nevada. Mr. Wilcox agreed residents felt safe living in Washoe County in part because of its excellent first responders. He stated Fire Captain Derek Reid, who was also a military veteran, stood out as a leader who supported and promoted his occupation by helping get desperately needed assistance to fellow emergency responders, and whose efforts had helped to further the nation's public safety. Mr. Wilcox was pleased to present Captain Reid with the National Firefighter of the Year Award, along with a check for \$375, on behalf of the VFW.

Captain Reid thanked Mr. Wilcox and the members of the VFW for their military service. He remarked the award had been quite a surprise to him and, as a fellow veteran, he was honored to receive it.

There was no public comment on this item.

20-143F **AGENDA ITEM 7** International Association of Firefighters, Local 2487 Report.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore stated he did not believe there was a report from the International Association of Firefighters, Local 2487. There was no public comment on this item.

20-144F **AGENDA ITEM 8** Fire Prevention Month Proclamation.

Dale Way, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention, explained Fire Prevention Month had begun in 1920, instituted by former United States President Woodrow Wilson after the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, and was now in its 100th year. Deputy Chief Way said fire prevention started with preparedness and, although the District worked to educate residents and the public throughout the year, the month of October had special significance due to the fire in Chicago. He pointed out most deaths, injuries, and home fires began in the kitchen, and he discussed 2020's fire prevention theme, 'Serving up Fire Safety in the Kitchen'. He mentioned the District's new website also provided lots of information for the community, and he reminded residents that wildfires remained a significant hazard in the fall in Washoe County. He encouraged everyone to remain vigilant and create defensible space, noting that defensible space had been credited with minimizing the spread of a recent fire at the Turquoise Solar Farm.

Vice Chair Berkbigler read the Proclamation. TMFPD Chief Charles Moore commended Deputy Chief Way's fire prevention experience and his work for the District.

There was no public comment on this item.

AGENDA ITEM 9 Fire Chief Report.

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

1. Hidden Valley Fire Station (37) Development Update
2. Green Waste Collection Dates
3. Fuels Division Update
4. Shooting Range Development

B. Commissioner DashBoard: Status update on ongoing Commissioner requests of the Fire Chief

C. Review of recent critical calls response statistics for July and August 2020 to include Mutual and Auto Aid for our regional partners.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore said progress continued toward the development of Hidden Valley Fire Station 37; the property had been purchased on Pelham Drive and consultants would present to the Planning Commission that week. A special use permit would be requested, and the development would be presented to the South Valleys Citizen Advisory Board and the Board of Adjustment. If approved, ground breaking was expected to begin sometime in April 2021, with possible occupancy by fall. The Chief emphasized the cost savings of the plans for the Pelham Drive property versus what it might have cost taxpayers to build a new, freestanding fire station.

Chief Moore noted the existing home on the property was expected to undergo some small repairs and would be listed for sale; he anticipated the real estate market would remain strong with significant demand for homes in the region. Commissioner Hartung wanted to know whether the station plans included three bays, noting he only saw two. Chief Moore explained there was an additional bay on the north side of the property where there was an existing driveway. Commissioner Hartung thought Hidden Valley residents would be excited about the new station.

Green waste collections run by the fuels crew would continue throughout the month of October, Chief Moore said. He estimated the first collection event had already allowed residents to clear out nearly 5,000 cubic yards of dead vegetation. August Isernhagen, the District's new Fuels Crew Chief, had served as the Operations Chief on the recent Baccarat Fire. Chief Moore said the TMFPD was fortunate to have him on the team as he continued to apply for grants for the District and reduce fuels throughout the County.

Chief Moore displayed photographs of several areas littered with "trigger trash" and various items people had hauled out to public lands to shoot and leave behind. In some areas, nearly every sign or tree was full of bullet holes, garbage was accumulating, and public resources were being degraded. Hazardous materials including lead were being spread throughout the region's public lands, and shell casings were littered everywhere, requiring a large effort to clean up. Chief Deputy County Clerk Jan Galassini noted copies of the photographs displayed by Chief Moore had been distributed to the Board and would be placed on the record.

Chief Moore appreciated that recreational shooting was a favorite pastime of many citizens, but he felt it would be beneficial to redirect those activities to more appropriate locations. He also acknowledged the issue was not as simple as just developing more ranges. Target shooting, especially when steel-jacketed ammunition was used, represented a serious wildfire danger to residents, and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) staff responded to around ten fires sparked every year by unsafe shooting practices. The Chief thought retailers and shooting enthusiasts could join forces to help educate the public about the dangers of target shooting in areas where wildfire risk was high. He also discussed the issue of public safety, noting the Sheriff's Office received calls regarding individuals shooting on private properties, many of whom were not aware they were no longer on public lands. He mentioned worrisome situations where other public land users had been endangered by shooting as they were out hiking, biking, and recreating. He expressed concern regarding the potential for conflict or tragedy as shooters and other public land users crossed paths.

Chief Moore acknowledged Washoe County lacked adequate access to developed shooting ranges. He said the County's Palomino Valley range was not enough and he agreed additional ranges needed to be developed, though it would require the County to work with the BLM regarding the land needed. He thought grant funding could be pursued, noting staff had been in touch with Senator Catherine Cortez-Masto's office regarding possible funding solutions. The Chief explained the range in Palomino Valley was shared with law enforcement and the military, and because of this, offered only limited opportunities for the public; an additional range would increase residents' access.

Chief Moore reiterated the need for public education, particularly regarding the use of steel-jacketed ammunition and shooting in congested recreation areas. He felt the TMFPD had taken the issue about as far as it could, but he said staff was ready to support Washoe County in their talks with the BLM to secure land to develop additional shooting ranges. He acknowledged that the economic uncertainty created by the COVID-19 pandemic presented some budget constraints, but the issue had been a topic of discussion for more than two years. He felt there was more momentum to find a solution at the present time than ever before.

Vice Chair Berkbighler shared that she would soon renew her permit to carry a concealed weapon, and her entire family enjoyed shooting. She thanked Commissioner Herman for spearheading efforts to expand public access to developed ranges in the County, and she emphasized the need for safe places for residents to enjoy this pastime. She expressed concern regarding recent reports of shots into and around residential homes and near open fields, schools, roads, and public trails. She knew this had occurred in Chair Lucey's district, in the Peavine Mountain area, in Spanish Springs, and in many other areas throughout the County. She was glad to have the support of the TMFPD and Commissioner Herman to expand shooting ranges for residents.

Commissioner Herman thanked Chief Moore for the TMFPD's support. She noted an area on BLM land had been identified and might work well as a new range. She

wondered whether discussions regarding a possible partnership with the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony (RSIC) had occurred.

Commissioner Hartung was not sure the RSIC would be interested, though the footprint of their tribal lands was very near some of the areas where shooting was occurring. Shooting was also occurring on BLM land within the City of Sparks near Golden Eagle Park, which he explained was technically a legal place to shoot but not necessarily a safe area in which to do so. He discussed an area off Red Rock Road where a depression in the ground formed a natural berm and appeared to be a good place for shooting. Chief Moore emphasized that concentrating shooting in appropriate, designated sites would be an ideal solution, as opposed to residents going out to shoot anywhere on BLM land. Both the Chief and Commissioner Hartung agreed safety was paramount.

Commissioner Jung thought it was a great idea to expand residents' ability to recreate safely, and she agreed more shooting ranges were needed throughout the County. She requested the schedule for law enforcement and military use of the Palomino Valley range, as well as that of the public safety training facility, to see how those taxpayer-funded resources were being used. Vice Chair Berkbighler also wanted to see the schedules. She noted her daughter worked at the training facility and could attest that the shooting areas were heavily used and typically fully booked all year long. The Vice Chair said she had just visited the facility the previous day and the range was highly active, as usual.

Moving on, Chief Moore provided an update that the Baccarat Fire was 40 percent contained and had burned approximately 10,500 acres. The evacuations had been lifted and there were no road closures in the area. Although approximately 75 to 100 structures had been threatened, none had been lost, and the Chief described how effective defensible space had successfully protected two homes where the fire burned right up to their property lines and stopped. The BLM was expected to begin the process of cleanup over the next few days.

Commissioner Hartung wondered what had caused the Baccarat Fire. Chief Moore said the fire's point of origin had been determined but the cause was still being investigated. Commissioner Hartung had the same question regarding the recent Turquoise Solar Farm fire. Dale Way, Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention, responded that preliminary reports indicated the latter fire may have started within the electrical panels themselves.

Commissioner Hartung acknowledged the potential for fire with the continued growth of solar farms in the region and the increasing amounts of energy being stored at those sites. He suggested instituting additional measures to prepare for the increased fire risk. Deputy Chief Way indicated there were code provisions which helped address large-capacity energy storage issues, and a system for a proposed solar site at Dodge Flats was currently being reviewed. He added that defensible space was a primary means of preventing potential solar farm fires from spreading if they did occur, and he pointed out this had been effective at the Turquoise Solar Farm.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

20-146F **AGENDA ITEM 10** Recommendation to authorize acceptance of a grant in an amount not to exceed \$1.2 million dollars from the Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) for the purpose of increasing fire suppression work in accordance with NRS 474.580 and authorize Fire Chief to execute necessary documents. The grant will be used to expand the fire suppression work TMFPD performs with NV Energy by increasing personnel and equipment. The equipment and personnel will also be used to assist with TMFPD's firefighting mission. (All Commission Districts)

Deputy District Attorney Mary Kandaras indicated documentation for Agenda Item 10 had been provided to the Board and would be placed on the record with copies available for the public. She explained staff's recommendation was to accept a grant from the Nevada Division of Forestry to support fire suppression work, matched by NV Energy, as part of the District's public-private partnership with the utility company.

Commissioner Jung thanked Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore and Chief Fiscal Officer Cindy Vance. She was glad staff did not just assume funding would always be there in the future, but instead continued to search for new sources of income to keep the District running.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Chair Lucey absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 10 be authorized.

20-147F **AGENDA ITEM 11** Recommend authorizing the payment of up-front expenses in a total amount not to exceed \$500,000 for the purchase of two (2) Type V fire apparatus from US Fire Equipment in accordance with bid ITB 3132 and two (2) "Chipper Dump Trucks" with vendor to be determined. These upfront costs will be reimbursed under the Hazardous Fuels Management and Standby Services Agreement with NV Energy or Nevada Division of Forestry Grant for fire suppression work. (All Commission Districts)

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District Chief Charles Moore said that, if authorized, the District would purchase two Type V fire apparatus and two chipper trucks to support the District's green waste program. The trucks would carry tools, resources, and a small amount of water to suppress any fire started during green waste processing.

Commissioner Hartung asked for more information about the Type V apparatus. Chief Moore explained Type V vehicles were typically smaller, 3/4 or 1-ton fire trucks, specifically designed for wildland access as opposed to structural firefighting. Commissioner Hartung wanted to know where the vehicles would be stored. Chief Moore answered they would be stored at the Barron Way station in the short term, and later one could be sent to the Stead station and one to the consolidated Washoe Valley station after

it was finished. This would support the District's goal of maintaining resources in both the northern and southern parts of the County. Commissioner Hartung thought the vehicles would be useful and hoped to see one stationed in Spanish Springs someday.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

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

20-148F **AGENDA ITEM 13** Recommendation to accept a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant award, # EMW-2019-FF-01534, in the estimated amount of \$1,038,799.62 for the purpose of hiring three (3) additional Firefighter/Paramedic positions to enhance the District's current staffing levels and authorize Finance to make appropriate budget adjustments. (All Commission Districts)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Chair Lucey absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 13 be accepted.

20-149F **AGENDA ITEM 15** Announcements/Reports.

There were no Board member comments.

20-150F **AGENDA ITEM 16** Public Comment.

Mr. Chris Rodahaffer indicated he was a concerned parent of a student athlete in Washoe County who had not been able to take part in fall sports as a result of restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 (C19) pandemic. He reviewed some statistics from the website of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which he felt supported his argument that school-aged children should be allowed to participate in sports. He believed parents, educators, public officials, and experts needed to be more concerned for the physical and mental health of children, who he expressed concern might turn to drugs, alcohol, social media, or devices to occupy their time. He noted student athletes had attended a recent Washoe County School District Board meeting to provide comments, but were told they needed to speak to the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (NIAA); the NIAA, in turn, advised them the decision belonged to the Washoe County School District. Mr. Rodahaffer asked for assistance with somehow pushing the NIAA to get the children playing sports before they suffered irreparable harm.

Mr. Bill Smith thought many other parents would have come to speak if not for their work schedules. On behalf of those parents and kids in the Washoe County School

District who wanted to be active and play sports, Mr. Smith said it was not C19 that was making children unsafe, but the treatment of it. At one point, his son had been sent home by the Sheriff's Office for playing catch in a field. He pointed out other children were being left home alone with no supervision, and he feared this would lead to despondency and suicidal ideation. He felt the treatment of C19 was worse than the disease itself. He opined students had learned nothing in school since March and were being deprived of daily exercise, after-school sports, and other activities such as drama, debate, and student government. Mr. Smith indicated he thought the Board of Fire Commissioners funded the NIAA and school taxes. He said he paid taxes on four properties and expressed frustration that, out of all the officials and agencies he and his children had contacted, only Commissioner Herman responded. He felt a deaf ear was being turned on high school students and this was not a healthy way to raise children.

* * * * *

11:05 a.m. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

BOB LUCEY, Chair
Truckee Meadows Fire
Protection District

ATTEST:

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

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