

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

TUESDAY

9:00 A.M.

DECEMBER 10, 2024

PRESENT:

Alexis Hill, Chair
Jeanne Herman, Vice Chair
Michael Clark, Commissioner
Clara Andriola, Commissioner

Catherine Smith, Chief Deputy County Clerk
Charles Moore, Fire Chief
Mary Kandaras, Chief Deputy District Attorney

ABSENT:

Mariluz Garcia, Commissioner

The Board convened at 9:00 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, Chief Deputy County Clerk Cathy Smith called roll, and the Board conducted the following business:

24-165F AGENDA ITEM 3 Public Comment.

Mr. Charles Kitchen noted that during the Callahan Fire, residents were told that Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) said the damage done was the cost of living in paradise. He mentioned they had met with fire officials one week after the event to understand why their neighborhood was left to its own defenses. He was told that the TMFPD was understaffed and that they had to call other agencies for assistance. He felt it was difficult to understand the explanation. He reported it was verified by 911 records that a series of 911 phone calls went out from homeowners on his street shortly after the fire had started at 10:15 a.m. He stated more frantic calls were made leading up to 10:59 a.m., reporting the fire was burning at his property. He explained there was no response from fire engines for 90 minutes, even though there were crews close by. He cited that when one call from the Saddlehorn neighborhood was made, there was an immediate response of four fire trucks when there was not a fire there. He commented that the fire burned on all sides of his home at 11:24 a.m. He could not help but think that the outcome could have been different if there had been any response to his calls. He understood the fire was a quickly evolving disaster, that resources could be limited, and fire staff could not be everywhere; however, he could not understand the rationale behind firefighters never making it down their street. He believed the only reason his house was standing was due to defensible space and luck that the winds changed in time for the fire to burn back on itself. He said his home survived and that he was thankful, but it was at a cost. He communicated that every day, he and his wife looked at the loss of the more than 40 trees that were planted over 20 years ago. He recounted the trees and meadow were gone and

that every day, for the foreseeable future, he cleaned residue, ash, and smoke. He speculated that if there had been a reasonable effort to stop the flames, he would have understood the damage, but he felt there was no effort. He was told that firefighters believed the Galena Creek, in his backyard, would have slowed the fire. He deemed it was a failed calculated risk and that there was no accountability. He asked for a transparent breakdown of why four homes in Cross Creek Lane were ignored for 90 minutes and suffered material damage. He asked where, when, and how long the fire engines were deployed. He opined that trust in the system was broken and said they needed to know what to do when flames approached their home again. He felt there appeared to be a systematic failure that needed to be addressed. He believed they would be on their own when another similar event evolved.

Chair Hill believed that staff met with Mr. Kitchen and asked if they provided the documents needed.

Mr. Kitchen confirmed staff provided documents of where the fire trucks were located and apologized for not having them with him.

Chair Hill expressed her sympathy and said staff would continue to work with him. She was thankful his house was preserved.

24-166F **AGENDA ITEM 4** Announcements/Reports.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore noted it was still open burning; however, with inclement weather coming the following weekend, it was likely the open burning would be curtailed. He mentioned that if people had open burning to do, they should conclude it that day. He requested the public watch the TMFPD's website and news announcements for disruption of the open burning process.

Commissioner Clark requested a meeting with Chief Moore and Mr. Charles Kitchen to find out more about the fire analysis. He understood the TMFPD learned more from every situation. He asked to be involved in the meeting and have Mr. Kitchen's and his neighbor's questions answered.

CONSENT ITEMS – 5A THROUGH 5C

24-167F **5A** Recommendation to approve the meeting minutes from the November 12, 2024, Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting.

24-168F **5B** Recommendation to approve the reclass of twelve (12) full-time Wildland Firefighter positions (\$46,508 - \$60,361), under the Police/Fire Nevada Public Employees' Retirement System) to twelve (12) Seasonal Wildland Firefighter positions (\$46,508 - \$60,361), under the Regular Nevada Public Employees' Retirement System) within the Wildland Fuels Reduction Program. (All Commission Districts)

24-169F 5C Recommendation to approve the sale of a surplus 1996 Yale U1263 Forklift Model #GLP050TFNUAE084, Serial #E177B15594U (FD238) with 5,428 hours, in “as is” condition from Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District to City of Sparks Fire Department for \$2,500 and authorize the Fire Chief and his designee to execute any necessary document to complete the sale. (All Commission Districts)

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

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

24-170F AGENDA ITEM 6 International Association of Fire Fighters Local 2487 Report.

Local 2487 Truckee Meadows Firefighters Association President James Clouser noted the foundation’s toy drive was a tremendous success in a short amount of time. He thanked Fire Engineer Anthony Schiro and Firefighter/Paramedic Alex Doerr, who spearheaded the toy drive with almost no time to prepare. He mentioned the toy drive ended with a full dump trailer of thousands of toys and over \$1,000 worth of gift cards. He expressed gratitude towards Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore, TMFPD Deputy Chief of Operations Chris Ketring, and other support staff involved. He commented it was a huge team effort and could only imagine how successful it would be in the years to come. He hoped they would continue the toy drive because, with the number of responses from the first year, the following years could be enormous. He showed appreciation for the Ronald McDonald House and Renown for partnering. He informed Chief Moore he may not attend the next meeting and thanked him. He told Chief Moore that it had been a good and interesting 12 years in which he had learned a lot, specifically from Chief Moore in the previous year.

Chair Hill thanked Mr. Clouser for all he did for the community and wanted to see how to continue to be a partner on the next toy drive.

24-171F AGENDA ITEM 7 Fire Chief Report

A. Informational briefing on operational matters and activities for the month of November 2024 and December 2024 to include the following items:

1. Automatic Aid Update
2. Capital Projects Update
3. Fire Chief Recruitment Update
4. Strategic Plan Update

B. Monthly Response Statistics for November 2024

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore reported a new automatic aid protocol had started with the City of Reno. He recited a personal story from when he was in college, and his nephew passed away from a drowning accident. He mentioned that because of the new automatic aid protocol, staff had been able to save a toddler. He was very happy to report the story because it touched his heart that they were able, through the new protocol, to save a young girl's life.

Chair Hill was amazed by the story. She welcomed TMFPD Deputy Chief of Operations Chris Ketring.

Deputy Chief Ketring reported they were 23 days into the 90-day automatic aid trial period with the City of Reno. He pulled 22 days of data and said out of the 597 dispatched calls for automatic aid to the Reno Fire Department (RFD) from the TMFPD, the TMFPD made it to the scene 245 times. He indicated out of the 286 dispatched automatic aid responses to the TMFPD from the RFD, the RFD made it to the scene 82 times. He felt the data showed the system was working. He noted the automatic aid policy was still in its infancy, and the TMFPD knew some changes to the process were needed. He communicated it was a redundant system, and to ensure they did not miss any calls, they dispatched both agencies to every call. He believed this was not sustainable in the long term. He explained they were compiling data, taking input from people in the field, and information from dispatch centers. He said they were meeting in a couple of weeks for the first 30-day meeting to see where the process could be streamlined. He opined they could not keep the current pace because staff were getting a call every hour. He addressed that dispatching both agencies was needed to get the system where it needed to be and start the process. He mentioned the TMFPD would collaborate with the City of Reno to see how they could make it better for the region. He highlighted that it was a positive they were field testing what would happen when the new computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system went live in September 2025. He pointed out adjustments could be made to make it more efficient when the CAD system went live. He recognized the staff in the dispatch centers and the individuals on the engines who were running all the calls. He explained they went into the process knowing they were going to be running a lot more calls, and with staff's input, the procedure would be better. He summarized if it were not for staff making the sacrifice, the TMFPD would not know where the system needed to be. He acknowledged all the staff in the field from the City of Reno, TMFPD, Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA), and dispatch. He highlighted Chief Moore's comments regarding the automatic aid call for a young girl and said the City of Reno, TMFPD, Reno Police Department (RPD), Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO), and REMSA responded. He said all the regional agencies were engaged and able to revive the patient and transport her to the hospital. He felt the patient's family was very thankful that she was still alive. He believed it was a great testament to what the staff was doing for the citizens.

Chair Hill thanked Deputy Chief Ketring for his leadership and knew automatic aid was something the Board of Fire Commissioners (BOFC) wanted to see for

a long time. She understood the team needed to be willing to partner and thanked them, dispatch, and REMSA for their support.

Chief Moore mentioned they should have a building permit for Hidden Valley soon. He understood there were a few more things to review with County Engineering. He noted the fences were up, they had done their practice cutting holes, and the building was ready to come down. He hoped that within the following five days, construction could begin in earnest. He was meeting with Apple that afternoon, and the TMFPD had a new memorandum of understanding (MOU) to propose to fund the Apple Station. He indicated the architectural plans were finished, and they would be submitting those plans for a building permit. He expected construction would start on the Apple Station shortly after the new year. He estimated the process would take about a year to finish, and it would look like Station 33. He understood everyone was anxious about Washoe Valley. He said he was talking to the Porter Group about finding money at the federal level to help get the project started. He believed the architecture would not take long to prepare because it would be modeled after Station 33 and Apple. He was still working hard to find approximately \$15 million to help get the Washoe Valley Station started.

Chair Hill commended Chief Moore on his hard work during the last month of his contract. She was grateful that he was continuing to work on the Washoe Valley Station before retirement. She was optimistic that the BOFC could get funds to make that happen.

Chief Moore discussed the TMFPD Chief recruitment. He reported the TMFPD had signed a contract with Bob Murray & Associates and requested Chief Deputy Clerk Cathy Smith distribute a timeline handout so the BOFC could understand the milestones and dates. Copies of this document were placed on file with the Clerk. He reported a kickoff meeting took place on December 6, 2024, and that the next item would be stakeholder interviews. He mentioned they were proposing to have meetings with the public, the Truckee Meadows Firefighters Association IAFF Local 2487 (E-Board), the Union, and one-on-one meetings with the BOFC regarding the qualities needed for the next TMFPD Chief. He indicated once the meetings were completed, the brochure would be produced and circulated. He noted there had already been advertisements about the position. He thought there would be an opportunity to select the next TMFPD Chief by May and have that person start by June or July.

Chair Hill referred to the week of April 11, 2025, on the timeline handout. She indicated Bob Murray & Associates would present candidates and make recommendations. She noted the participants would be Bob Murray & Associates and the BOFC via Zoom. She suggested an item be placed on a future agenda to create a two-person search committee. She believed the intent was to have two Commissioners attend to make recommendations. Alternatively, the Chair and Vice Chair could be on the committee. She wanted the BOFC to think about the search committee. She felt that opening it up to other members of the BOFC was appropriate. She thanked Chief Moore for the update.

Chief Moore gave an update on the strategic plan and milestones. He informed the BOFC that they had been given a summary of goals and objectives. He said the TMFPD was making good progress and was excited to see solar on Station 45 soon. He indicated that the plan was a good template for the TMFPD regarding budget planning and the execution of its goals and objectives. He noted that staff were fully engaged in using the plan every day to try to keep the TMFPD on track.

Chair Hill asked Chief Moore if, with his exit, the TMFPD had leaders on each piece of the plan to continue moving forward.

Chief Moore confirmed that was correct. He mentioned that the TMFPD was not done burning sagebrush. He believed that there was a small fire a few days previous. He said a person would think that in December, wildfire season would be done, but it was not. He urged the public to use caution because until there was a substantial amount of precipitation, the problem would persist. He wanted the citizens to be mindful that accidents and brush fires could still occur this late in the year.

24-172F **AGENDA ITEM 8** Recommendation to accept Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District's Audited Financial Statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024, as presented; approve the re-appropriation of \$204,191 in the Capital Projects Fund and \$87,094 in the EMS Fund for purchase order encumbrances committed in fiscal year 2023-2024 and authorize the District to proceed with distribution of the financial statements for public record, as required by law. (All Commission Districts).

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Fiscal Officer Cynthia Vance introduced Eide Bailly Partner Kurt Schlicker. Ms. Vance reported that the TMFPD was fiscally sound, but there were decreases that year. She mentioned the General Fund end balance was \$2.9 million, which was 22 percent of the current year's expenditures. She noted the decrease was planned; however, some of it was due to collections from fuel companies, particularly NV Energy. She indicated that if they did not come within 60 days of year-end, the TMFPD was not able to record them as revenues; therefore, they had the expenses without the revenue offsetting it. She said the General Fund was also the sole source of revenue for the Sick and Annual Comp Benefits (SACB) Fund, Capital Projects Fund, and some exceptions in the Debt Service Fund. She commented that it also provided some support to the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Fund as it grew. She explained that the General Fund transferred \$250,000 to the SACB Fund, \$3.6 million to the Capital Projects Fund, and just over \$1 million to the Debt Service Fund to equal principal and interest payments. She pointed out that there was a transfer of \$250,000 to the EMS Fund, but over \$1 million was budgeted, which was not needed.

Ms. Vance communicated that the Wildland Fire Emergency (WFE) Fund was another other special revenue fund. She reported that during fiscal year (FY) 2024; the WFE Fund was used for all types of fire assignments, including out-of-district emergencies. She noted it was allowed to hold \$1.5 million in deposits and could be found

on page 62 of the *Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances - Budget and Actual - Capital Projects Fund Year Ended June 30, 2024*, document. She explained that at the end of the year, there was \$1.3 million in receivables, but about \$300,000 was deferred because it was not received within the 60-day notice. She mentioned the ending fund balance of \$917,000. She said that because of the out-of-district assignments and growth, the TMFPD had decided towards the end of FY24 and into FY25 to create a new cost center in the General Fund because they were reimbursed and were not only district emergencies. She informed the BOFC that the WFE Fund would be held for district emergencies. She stated that the Capital Projects Fund's main source of revenue was transferred from the General Fund; however, the TMFPD did see reimbursements of \$617,000 from Apple and Enhanced 911 (E911) for the construction of the new station and the PURVIS system. She detailed that the ending fund balance was \$3.4 million, which would be rolled over. She said most of it was construction projects, whether remodeled or new.

Ms. Vance explained that the EMS Fund was new and started July 1, 2022. She said \$250,000 was transferred into the EMS Fund for cashflows but had received ground emergency medical transportation (GEMT) funds at almost \$5 million. She noted it included over \$3 million related to FY22 and then \$1 million for the prior submission. She mentioned that a re-review of the prior submission in which the TMFPD only received about \$1.9 million had resulted in an additional \$1 million. She indicated that for FY25, there were no budget transfers from the General Fund since it was expected to be fully self-sufficient. She commented that the total revenues were \$6.5 million, with almost \$5 million being from GEMT and \$1.2 million from insurance companies and individuals for reimbursements. She communicated that the expenses of \$5.6 million were mostly salaries and benefits for staff, who were scheduled as overhead, management of facilities, and individuals manning ambulances. She felt it was important to consider that expenses included full accruals. That meant the staff got all pension and other post-employment benefit expenses, which were accrued and recorded directly into the fund.

Ms. Vance indicated an additional proprietary fund was the Worker's Compensation Fund, to pay for claims presented prior to July 1, 2012, related to heart and lung claims, which reimbursed the City of Reno. She mentioned the fund had a net position of \$1.4 million, with a decrease that year to \$1.39 million due to a claim adjustment. She noted they used the City of Reno's actuary valuation and explained that an older claim could increase due to different circumstances with the patient, which could increase the claims expense estimate. She reported that for any retiree or employee who transferred to the City of Reno, the TMFPD could owe a portion of expenditures until all members were gone.

Ms. Vance communicated that there was also a Stabilization Fund balance of \$654,000, which received interest earnings during the year and was available for a decrease in revenues. She said the SACB Fund was nonmajor and was blunted to the General Fund; however, it did pay out liabilities for compensation absences, which was sitting at over \$9 million for governmental activities. She indicated the EMS Fund would pay for its own compensation absences, but the SACB Fund had an ending balance of

\$125,000, which they were trying to continue to increase for FY25. She believed TMFPD was transferring \$850,000 to the fund, but it was getting used, and liability was growing. She noted a fund balance of 1.4 percent of that liability. She stated that the collective bargaining agreement had changed in 2019, which significantly increased the liability because of the way sick time was paid out.

Ms. Vance reported that just over \$1 million had been transferred to the Debt Service Fund to pay \$761,000 in principal and \$246,000 in interest. She noted that two findings were recorded in the financial statements. She said the first was related to a prior period adjustment. She indicated that the TMFPD found the error and provided it to the auditor. She commented that the finding related to revenues recorded in error for reimbursements. She said the biggest was that the TMFPD double-charged the State, and the State double-paid. She mentioned it was detected during a change in employees, and since then, the review process changed to be more detailed to prevent errors. She explained the second finding related to multi-year software contracts needing to be recorded as a long-term asset and liability. She recorded it as a long-term asset and liability government-wide but forgot to put it into the General Fund. She divulged it was her error, and the auditors detected it. She said that the TMFPD hired a new accountant to grow into succession planning for her. She hoped that person could do additional reviews and catch errors with the new standards that were complicated.

Chair Hill thanked Ms. Vance for the review of the audited financial report. She appreciated that Ms. Vance highlighted the deficiencies and her plan to ensure more support. She mentioned it was a big department. She indicated that while Ms. Vance had some help, Chair Hill was glad they were training a staff member to support her.

TMFPD Chief Charles Moore asked Ms. Vance to clarify the workers' compensation payments to the City of Reno. He recalled that perhaps before Ms. Vance was in her current position, the TMFPD made a buyout for some workers' compensation claims. He asked if Ms. Vance recalled that and if she could expand on it.

Ms. Vance confirmed that the TMFPD bought out all claims presented prior to July 1, 2012. She noted that the TMFPD would pay a portion of any claim presented after July 1, 2012. She mentioned the TMFPD paid about \$6 million over the five-year buyout time. She recalled there were bigger claims that were bought out as well. She said that after the buyout, the City of Reno was billing the TMFPD. She mentioned that the TMFPD had shown the City of Reno they had bought certain claims. She stated that significant heart and lung claims were presented prior to July 1, 2012, and that the TMFPD was no longer responsible for other types of workers' compensation claims. She explained that since heart and lung claims could present very late, the TMFPD still held liability for them.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Andriola, seconded by Vice Chair Herman, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Commissioner Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 8 be accepted, approved, and authorized.

24-173F **AGENDA ITEM 9** Possible Closed Session pursuant to NRS 288.220 for the purpose of discussing with management representatives labor matters and negotiations.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore indicated there was no need for a closed session.

24-174F **AGENDA ITEM 10** Announcements/Reports.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore informed the Board of Fire Commission (BOFC) that the TMFPD received two new ambulances, and the ambulances were being equipped with radios and other equipment. He indicated they should be in service within one week to ten days.

Chair Hill noted that the two new ambulances were great news. She asked Chief Moore how long it took for the ambulances to be bought.

Chief Moore reported that the purchasing process started about 18 months ago.

24-175F **AGENDA ITEM 11** Public Comment.

On the call for public comment, Mr. Paul White mentioned a long-standing drug use policy by the Reno Fire Department (RFD). He reported it was unique and humiliated the RFD nationwide about ten years ago. He recalled an article from the *Reno Gazette Journal*. He said nothing had changed and that the RFD Chief would not change the policy. He hoped that the RFD Chief would listen to Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Charles Moore. He indicated that the policy allowed the RFD to have a driving under the influence (DUI) limit of up to five times the limit on various drugs while still operating machinery. He mentioned it included a policy in which the union could take their time testing the individual. He explained that if the individual tested negative, the individual who made the complaint could be fired. He stated that the group Education Crusade went to every fire station in Reno, and nobody thought it was a big deal. He felt that one would have to read the policy to believe it. He commented that staff could be a .08 and still be within their contract. He speculated that this was why the drug use policy got so much national attention. He voiced that the RFD Chief told him three years ago that he would address it. Mr. White said this was a lie and that the RFD Chief did not address it. He hoped individuals would ask the RFD for a copy of their drug use policy and compare it with the County's. He opined that most people did not know about the policy. He asked how the policy belonged in the community.

9:37 a.m. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

ALEXIS HILL, Chair
Truckee Meadows Fire
Protection District

ATTEST:

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

*Minutes Prepared By:
Lizzie Tietjen, Deputy County Clerk*