

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PREVENTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
January 22, 2014

Those Present:

Chairperson Ann Grant
Trustee Greg Felton
Trustee Kevin Kjer
Trustee Larry Schussel
Trustee Steve Seibel
Mike McCormick, Legal Counsel
Fire Chief Ben Sharit
Assistant Chief Mark Novak
Battalion Chief Tim Allison
Battalion Chief Jim Antti

Battalion Chief Jim Hardison
Captain Rich Nalder
FF/P Kelly Pettit
Fire Marshal Eric Guevin
Fire Inspector Todd Stroup
Forester John Pickett
Supervisor Keegan Schafer
Administrative Assistant Kate Warner
Administrative Aide Carrie Nolting
Resident Bob Cook

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 3:06 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Chairperson Grant, Trustee Felton, Trustee Kjer, and Trustee Seibel were present. Trustee Schussel attended via phone.

4. Approval of Agenda

Trustee Felton motioned to approve the agenda as amended. Trustee Kjer seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

5. Public Comment.

Chief Hardison announced that this was his last board meeting before his retirement that it had been a pleasure working with everyone, that Tahoe Douglas is a great organization and that we should all be proud of the work being done here.

6. Approval of the Consent Calendar.

Chairperson Grant removed Item “e” from the agenda; it will be addressed at the next meeting.

Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes 12/18/13
- b. Monthly Expenditures
- c. Financial Statements 10/31/13
- d. Job Description - Battalion Chief – Revision
- e. Personnel Policy – 2.10 Drug and Alcohol-free Workplace - Revision

Trustee Schussel asked that Item “a” be discussed, as the meeting minutes did not list his presence in the attendee list, however, he was shown present under the roll call. Trustee Schussel was present at the 12/18/13 meeting.

Trustee Seibel motioned to approve the Consent Calendar Items a-d; with Item “e” moved to the February meeting; and with one correction:

- Add Trustee Schussel’s name under “Those Present”.

Trustee Kjer seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

7. For Possible Action: Consent items moved forward

None.

8. Presentation: Employee Recognition Tim Allison

On November 18, 2013, the Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District was awarded the designation of HeartSafe Community by the Nevada Project HeartBeat. This designation affirms the fire district’s continuing dedication to improving the chances of survival for anyone suffering a cardiovascular emergency.

The criteria for the chain of survival in sudden cardiac arrest are early access to emergency care, early CPR, early defibrillation and early advanced care. FF/P Kelly Pettit was acknowledged for her dedication and tireless efforts in providing more than 120 CPR training classes for the employees and residents of the fire district to ensure that the criteria is met and to give victims of cardiovascular emergencies the best possible chance for a positive outcome.

FF/P Pettit assisted in the application process by locating the existing AEDs in the fire district and logging the type, the serial numbers and the defibrillation pad expiration dates for a database that will be used to monitor replacement and training needs.

**9. For Possible Action: Discussion and possible action: Election of Board Offices for 2014
Chairperson Grant**

Trustee Seibel nominated Trustee Kjer as Chairperson. Trustee Felton seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Trustee Kjer nominated Trustee Schussel as Vice-Chairperson. Trustee Seibel seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Past Chairperson Grant passed the gavel to Chairperson Kjer who directed the remainder of the meeting.

**10. Presentation: Fuels Management – 2013 Fire Season Review and 2014 Planning
and Projections
Chief Novak/Forester Pickett**

Forester Pickett reviewed the key tactics that fuels management uses to reduce the chance that homes catch on fire: thin the forest adjacent to the community; protect the homes from igniting by encouraging defensible space and ignition proof construction; and provide rapid fire suppression in a fire event. These are the pillars that have been scientifically proven to protect communities from catastrophic wildfire.

Acres Treated - In 2013, the Zephyr Crew treated 179 acres in the fire district through projects in Edgewood Canyon, Zephyr Point Conference Center, Friday's Station and Shakespeare Rock. The governmental shutdown closed the BLM projects, while the FEMA projects continued which just reinforced that project diversity is important to keep the crew working. Since 2007, over 1200 acres have been treated in the fire district.

Grant Status -

- FEMA - \$970,000 total, match of \$323,600 from land owners in the area.
- SNPLMA Round 13 – BLM funds for the Shakespeare Rock project, 8 acres completed to date.
- SNPLMA Round 14 – grant for \$237,400 for Haines Canyon on the backside of Kingsbury.
- Stevens Authority - grant for \$165,200, no match. For Highlands and Edgewood fuels reduction projects.
- California Clearinghouse – grant for \$100,950, match of \$100,950.
- NDF Grant – has \$25,000 remaining to do the work off of Buchanan.

Forester Pickett feels that through these grants the fire district has regained financial position following the loss of NVFSC funds.

Public Engagement - The challenge continues to be motivating the community to protect itself. The Fire Adaptive Community has established Best Practices in 8 communities around the nation to serve as role models for wildfire community protection. NLTFPD has been nominated and has asked TDFPD to join in the learning network. The Nevada Fire Adaptive Communities networks will be the education arm of the NVFSC reborn. The network has been established and will be managed by UNR Extension Cooperative, Ed Smith – *Living with Fire*. The focus is education and awareness only, not grant management.

Curbside Defensible Space - Also in 2013, 180 defensible space inspections and 41 chipping requests were completed. Curbside inspections are now the driving force to raise awareness with our homeowners. These inspections began in 2010, when the fire district divided the 2500 single family residences into four groups and set off to complete the curbside inspections over the next 4 years. To date, 1839 curbside inspections have been completed by our engine companies. This year, 102 of the 180 defensible space inspections were generated through the curbside program.

Compost You Combustibles - Over 380 tons of biomass were generated from the Heavenly Boulder parking lot for pine needle recycling.

Community Workdays – This was a new program in 2013. During Community Work Days, a Zephyr Fire Crew squad created defensible space on four different properties in each of seven neighborhoods. The crew spent two hours working free of charge on each property. These were typically high profile, eye sore locations in each neighborhood to stimulate action in the community. We sent out letters informing residents that on the assigned weekend, all cut vegetation that was stacked on the street would be chipped. At the end of the day, the chipper truck went down every street to chipping piles. No request forms were required. In addition to the private property, 31 public parcels were also treated in these neighborhoods. Community workdays are scheduled again for July-August in 2014.

Zephyr Crew –Is a Type II A hand crew that provides curbside chipping, pile burning and fuels maintenance in the fire district and responds to wildfire assignment requests outside the fire district when needed. Opportunities for wildfire response aid in keeping the crew members current with their required training and experience competencies. The crew consistently treats 100+ acres per year in the fire district.

Frontier Building – We continue to lease the building for \$1000 a month which includes utilities. Utility separation is anticipated this summer with purchase completion expected in the fall of 2014.

Financial Reporting and grant management systems - All grants look at the same regulations, but interpret them differently. We are setting up internal systems to meet the reporting requirements.

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan – Both Chief Novak and Forester Pickett contributed to the plan revisions. This plan and others are required for payment on grants and funding in a natural disaster situation.

Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) –This is also being updated to meet new grant requirements.

Fuel and Fire Behavior Modeling – Demonstrates how projects are chosen, and how grant funds are targeted.

Trustee Felton asked about the excess funds from the Stephens Grant and if there were restrictions as to what we can do with those funds. Yes, according to Forester Pickett, we can request a scope change on any federal grant.

Trustee Felton also asked about defensible space compliancy and it was clarified that this year there was approximately 60% compliance.

Trustee Seibel asked about the maintenance cycle. Initial entry does not always leave the property in the ultimately desired state. Many variables are involved. Forester Pickett noted that careful monitoring of completed projects is being done, and funding needs addressed.

Trustee Felton said that defensible space clears the young growth and ladder fuels, and leaves only the mature trees. He questioned if that is sustainable (what will happen when the mature trees die?) Forester Pickett stated that in our forest, we do not have a multi-tiered canopy. A closed canopy actually slows down the spread of fire.

Chief Novak recognized Forester Pickett as the master planner of the fuels teams and Supervisor Schafer as the one who makes it all happen on the ground, and who monitors and motivates the crew to perform at high standards.

11. Presentation: Update on 2014 Board Goals
Chief Sharit

Public Comment – none.

Chairman Kjer complimented Chief Sharit on the progress on the goals and the subsequent updates provided to the board.

- 12. For Possible Action:** **Appoint Board Trustee representatives to work on the board goals for FY 2015**
Chief Sharit

Chief Sharit nominated Trustee Schussel. Trustee Seibel nominated Trustee Felton.

No public comment.

Trustee Seibel made a motion that Trustees Schussel and Felton be appointed to draft the board goals. Motion Grant carried 5-0.

- 13. For Possible Action:** **Approval of the 2014 Strategic Plan**
Assistant Chief Novak

Chief Novak reviewed the history behind the new format of the Strategic Plan which was designed to be more user-friendly. It is the result of input from a diverse group of employees at all levels and it is intended to be a guide for the fire district direction over the next 3-5 years.

Trustee Felton asked about the timelines and how the distribution falls. Chief Novak stated that it was the intent to add a separate timeline schedule to ensure a realistic balance and time frame and that will be provided at a later date. It was also noted that in the midst of the planning, the fire district was awarded the SAFER grant, conducted three fire academies and integrated 17 new employees. So though the final plan was delayed, work continued and several of the original initiatives were completed and added at the end of the document.

Trustee Grant asked about the items that were removed from the former format like the capital expenditure plan. Chief Novak stated that several paralleling documents will follow to address those separate issues including capital expenditures, succession planning, and service delivery models.

No public comment.

Trustee Grant made a motion to approve the 2014 Strategic plan. Trustee Seibel seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

- 14. Report Item:** **Review of Monthly Fire District Activity**
Fire Chief Ben Sharit

Chief Sharit thanked Trustee Grant for her service as board chairperson for the past year. Her commitment, knowledge, professionalism were a great asset to the staff and him during the past year.

Chief Sharit acknowledged Chief Hardison for his 23 years of service to the fire district and congratulated Captain Nalder who has been selected to replace Chief Hardison as Battalion Chief for C Shift.

Employee Years of Service Recognition

Captain Brandon Brady	8 Years of Service
Captain Brandon Spry	8 Years of Service
Acting Captain Steve Prather	8 Years of Service
Captain Justin Rossi	7 Years of Service
Engineer Kevin Green	7 Years of Service
Engineer Ben Pratt	7 Years of Service

Updates

- 1. NVPERS** – State of Nevada conducted audits in 2010 & 2012, which raised concerns about the reporting of our seasonal employees. At this point, the fire district has been directed by NV PERS to file corrected reports which will result in funds being returned from NV PERS. In doing this, the fire district will then need to submit new filings with the IRS for social security for each of the employees involved. Trustee Felton asked for clarification on the expected expense involved. Chief Sharit stated that at this point, the expense involved will be in staff and accountant time to file the corrected reports. He reiterated that the filings will be corrected and the process will be correct going forward.
- 2. Budgeting Process** – FY 2015 budget process has gotten underway.
- 3. Paramedic Scholarship** – The board had approved a scholarship for an employee to attend paramedic school in 2014, however, no one was accepted into the program in this round. The next opportunity will be in the fall.

Financial Summary

No changes.

Acknowledgements

Trustee Felton noted that December ambulance numbers are up, and asked what the change might be attributed to. Chief Allison noted the holiday events – *SnowGlobe* and *Soundscape* drive more visitors and hard snow at Heavenly resulted in more injuries.

Chairman Kjer asked about the permit requirements for time limits on sound going past the curfew (at the Horizon). Fire Marshal Guevin said that the fire district and Douglas County approved the permit, and that the county did address the issue. There was a delay in getting the performers from the airport, so the promoter allowed the show to be extended due to the late start. The event was held responsible for the reimbursement of hotel room refunds due to complaints.

15. Discussion: Discussion on time change for next meeting, Wednesday, February 26, 2014 @ 1:30 pm; possible agenda items.
Location is the Tahoe Chamber Board Room.

Suggested agenda items:

- Ethics presentation

Adjourn

Trustee Grant made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Schussel seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm.

Closed Session: Per NRS 288.220, collective bargaining discussions

This meeting was recorded on audio tape.

Kate Warner
Administrative Assistant
Tahoe Douglas Fire