

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PREVENTION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
**May 21, 2015**

**Those Present:**

Chairman Larry Schussel  
Vice Chairman Greg Felton via phone  
conference  
Trustee Bill Kirschner  
Trustee Kevin Kjer  
Trustee Steve Seibel  
Fire Chief Ben Sharit  
Legal Counsel Devon Reese  
Assistant Chief Tim Allison  
Battalion Chief Rich Nalder  
Battalion Chief Jim Antti

Fire Marshal Eric Guevin  
Fire Inspector Todd Stroup  
Captain Ralph Jones  
Firefighter/Paramedic James Ward  
Forester John Pickett  
Zephyr Crew Supervisor Keegan Schafer  
Office Manager Kate Warner  
Accounting Specialist Carrie Nolting  
Administrative Assistant Casey O'Neill  
Guest Speaker Gary Midkiff

**1. Call to Order.**

Meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance.**

Pledge of allegiance was led by Trustee Kjer.

**3. Roll Call.**

Chairman Schussel, Trustee Kirschner, Trustee Kjer and Trustee Seibel were present. Vice Chairman Felton attended via phone conference. A quorum was present.

**4. Approval of Agenda.**

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

**5. Public Comment.**

Trustee Kirschner announced that this Saturday, May 23 the Lake Tahoe Corvette Club is having a fundraiser to honor flight veterans of Reno at San Rafael Park in Reno. Then on Monday, May 25 there will be a pancake breakfast for the Honor Flight in Sparks. Also, on June 19 – June 21

there will be a Vietnam Honor Flight from Reno to Washington, DC. You can visit [www.honorflightnv.org](http://www.honorflightnv.org) for more information.

6. Approval of the Consent Calendar.

Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes 04/20/15
- b. Monthly Expenditures
- c. Financials 01/31/15, 02/28/15, 03/31/15
- d. Job Description: Defensible Space Inspector
- e. Job Description: Assistant Chief

Trustee Seibel motioned to approve the Consent Calendar items. Trustee Kirschner seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

7. **For Possible Action: Consent items moved forward.**

None.

8. **For Possible Action: Public Hearing and possible adoption of the FY 2015-16 Tentative Budget.**  
Fire Chief Ben Sharit

This vote is required by Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) to adopt the Tentative Budget for FY 2015-16. There have been no changes to the budget since the initial review was completed at last month's meeting.

Trustee Kirschner motioned to approve the FY 2015-16 Tentative Budget. Trustee Seibel seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

9. **For Possible Action: Public Hearing and possible adoption of the FY 2015-16 Final Budget.**  
Fire Chief Ben Sharit

Items noted in the 2015-16 FY Final Budget:

**General Fund** (Page 6, Column 4)

The total of \$3,003,919 in Ad Valorem tax revenue reflects a last minute decrease of \$71,938 from the Tentative Budget. This was due to the governor's recent approval for abatement of 30% of two large properties in the district as long as they meet certain "green" energy requirements.

Salaries and wages, employee benefits, services and supplies and capital outlay all remain the same from the Tentative to the Final Budget.

The Contingency Fund remains at \$150,000 anticipating the same type of wildfire threat this season as last year because of the back to back dry winters here in the Lake Tahoe basin. The ending fund balance reflects a difference of the \$71,938 expended from the Unreserved Fund.

**Capital Projects Fund (Page 8)**

There was an increase of \$35,000 in capital outlay expenditures from the Tentative Budget to the Final Budget for an ending fund balance of \$464,920. The Capital Projects Committee has been working on updating TDFPD's ten year Capital Projects Plan and will present it to the fire board next month regarding any changes in expenditures.

**Sick Leave Fund (Page 9).**

There were no changes from the Tentative to the Final Budget

**Special Service Fund (Page 10)**

There was an increase of \$1,100 in services and supplies. The Capital Projects Committee met after Chief Sharit completed the Tentative Budget and identified equipment and supplies needed for FY 2015-16.

**Health Insurance Fund (Page 11)**

There was an increase in the Final Budget due to a transfer of \$38,490 from the Fire Safe Community Fund. This was budgeted in preparation for the Affordable Care Act (ACA) requirement that all employees enroll in health insurance. As of today this has not been confirmed, but the district must budget for the additional costs anticipating that it will become a requirement. This is reflected in the Final Budget's ending fund balance for a total of \$3,443,053. Lastly, expenditures for employee benefits and services and supplies remain the same from Tentative to the Final Budget.

**Fire Safe Community Fund (Page 12)**

There was an increase in salaries and wages and employee benefits. This was due to pay increases for full time personnel and the hiring of 30 new seasonal employees after the Tentative Budget was completed. Services and supplies and capital outlay expenditures remain the same.

**Ambulance Fund (Page 13)**

No changes from the Tentative to Final Budget.

Chief Sharit noted that the fire district typically anticipates a 3% increase in revenues based on historical legislative actions. However, this year there was a decrease of 7 million in assessed valuation and a decrease in the valuation of two large properties at Stateline due to the Green Initiative as he discussed earlier. Therefore, actual revenue in Ad Valorem in the General Fund decreased by approximately \$99,000. Chief Sharit emphasized that the district is flat in revenue for FY 2015-16.

Trustee Kirschner asked if the fire district receives any benefits from the Nevada State Fuel Tax.

Chief Sharit replied, yes, it is located within the consolidated tax that the district receives. All state sales tax are consolidated together and applied to a formula that divides them throughout the state of Nevada across all 17 counties.

Chairman Schussel inquired about the Ambulance Fund having no changes; however he noted that on Page 14 of the Final Budget there was a change in the purchase of equipment.

Chief Sharit corrected his previous statement regarding the Ambulance Fund. The purchase of equipment decreased by \$100,000 from the Tentative Budget to the Final (now \$50,000) because the district will not be purchasing a new ambulance this fiscal year. The Capital Projects Committee determined that the new ambulance would be purchased in 2017.

Vice Chairman Felton, emphasized what Chief Sharit stated about the change in Ad Valorem taxes. The green tax 30% abatement on the Stateline properties will last for 10 years. This is not a short term deficit; it will affect the district for the next 9-10 years.

Trustee Kirschner motioned to approve the Final Budget for FY 2015-16. Trustee Kjer seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

**10. For Possible Action:** **Discussion and possible action to direct the Fire Chief to sell 5,572 square feet of Commercial Floor Area (CFA) acquired with the purchase of the new Zephyr Crew Quarters at 205 Kingsbury Grade.**

Gary Midkiff, Midkiff and Associates

Midkiff explained that the TRPA regulates commercial uses, commercial flooring areas and expansions of an existing property. When the Frontier Building was purchased, there was 5,572 square feet of Commercial Flooring Area (CFA) that the district cannot use because the fire district is a public entity. The CFA can be used in Douglas County without a need for a special determination. However, if the city wanted to use the CFA, it would require county approval before applying for a transfer. Nancy McDermott from Douglas County confirmed that they could not issue approval for the right to leave the county because there is so little available already. There is no CFA available for any uses in Round Hill or Marla Bay because the old community plan moved what was available to Stateline years ago. Currently, there are a few square feet available in the Kingsbury Grade area and about 32,000 square feet available at Stateline. However, it takes a County plan amendment to move the CFA around.

The 5,572 square feet of CFA at the Frontier Building is a commodity that may be worthwhile for the fire district to sell. One option is to hold onto the CFA with the possibility of receiving more money in the future if the economy continues to improve. Midkiff has been involved in CFA sales in South Lake Tahoe this year for 5-10,000 square feet lots going for \$28 and \$35 per

foot. Furthermore, Midkiff knows of at least two potential buyers that are interested in the CFA if the district decides to sell now. The district may have been able to sell for \$50 a foot in the past, but he has not seen anything over \$35 since the recession. If the district decides to sell now, Midkiff suggested setting a minimum bid and wait to see what comes in. If no one opens at this level, we could set the minimum bid lower and wait to see if it goes up.

Trustee Kirschner asked if the fire district could establish a lease with an upgrade in the future as far as the CFA process is concerned.

Midkiff responded that this may be possible. As long as there is a clear ability to assign the CFA to a project, and if the contract for sale or lease with the contingency on the back end is part of the agreement, he supposed this will work. TRPA and Douglas County would not get involved with the transaction between the district and the buyer. A lease may be more difficult, but a sale with a back end provision over time, could possibly bring more money to the district.

Trustee Seibel asked if the county has ever allowed any CFA to go out to the public.

Midkiff answered yes. The Marriott's CFA in South Lake Tahoe came from Douglas County. However, the county is now in a position where there is virtually no supply and does not want any more CFA to go away.

Trustee Seibel asked if our CFA square footage can be sold anywhere in Douglas County or just Tahoe.

Midkiff responded only at the lake. There is no value to it outside of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Trustee Kjer asked where the auction would take place and how would this work.

Midkiff said that the district would publish a public notice in the Tahoe Daily Tribune with general information and the date and time of the auction in order to cultivate a commercial interest locally and to possibly generate a higher return.

Vice Chairman Felton suggested that when advertising for the CFA in the newspaper, TDFPD should also announce the purchase of the new Zephyr Crew building with a photo of the building. He believes people in our community do read the newspaper and this would be a good opportunity to get the word out.

Furthermore, Vice Chairman Felton asked if it is true that the fire district being a government entity would not have a need for this CFA in the future.

Midkiff replied that is correct. Public service use does not require CFA.

Additionally, Vice Chairman Felton stated that it sounds like Mr. Lane is interested in maintaining CFA in Nevada and Chief Sharit may want to contact him directly.

Trustee Kirschner motioned to approve the action item.

Trustee Kjer asked if there should be a minimum price set for how much the district wants to sell it for.

Legal Counsel Reese stated that as the fire district's legal counsel, he would direct the fire chief to sell the CFA, and when he has a buyer he will come back to the board for the approval of the actual sale. Ultimately, the board is not approving the sale today, but approving the activity of the sale. He advised that there is no governing law that states how it should be done, as long as it is done publicly and in a commercial manner.

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

**11. For Possible Action: Discussion and possible action regarding minor revisions to vacation accrual time in the Employment Contract of Fire Chief to comply with Nevada law.**

Legal Counsel Devon Reese

Legal Counsel Reese stated that at the previous meeting the board decided to table this action item to have more time to review it. He has stated his position in regards to legal requirements and this action item lists the options and staff recommendations, which are included in the board packet:

1. Approve the proposed change of vacation rollover in the current Fire Chief's contract on a fiscal year basis from 32 hours to 50% of accrued or unused vacation balance and in addition, the ability to sell back 50% of accrued or unused vacation balance.

2. Take no action.

TDFPD Staff recommends the approval of the proposed change to the Fire Chief's agreement for vacation rollover and sellback.

Trustee Kjer commented that since it has been a unique year, he believes the board should make changes to the contract for this past year only. He also thinks that the board should look at the total compensation package for Chief Sharit and compare it to other chief's contracts in the area when reviewing ours in the future.

Trustee Seibel clarified that if the board approves this for one time only, then the contract would not need to be changed.

Legal Counsel Reese replied that there is not a need to change the contract; the board could agree to accept the action item as approved for this fiscal year only.

Trustee Seibel agreed with Trustee Kjer on approving the action item on a one-time basis since the situation was unique this year.

Chairman Schussel stated that the board members reviewed the Local 2441 contract, Battalion Chief contracts, Chief Sharit's contract and other chief contracts in the area and had a lot of information to digest in order to make a sound decision.

Trustee Seibel motioned to approve the action item. He reiterated that it is for one time only and it does not change Chief Sharit's contract. Trustee Kirschner seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

- 12. For Possible Action:**                      **Discussion and possible action on the Capital Projects Purchase Recommendation to authorize the Fire Chief to purchase up to two (2) staff vehicles at a price not to exceed \$60,000 in the FY 2014-15 budget.**  
Battalion Chief Jim Antti

The district is looking to purchase another staff vehicle and one station utility truck for this fiscal year (2014-15). The staff vehicle would replace the Ford Explorer that is currently being used by Fire Prevention. This Explorer is quite old and well past its service life. In addition, the station utility truck would replace the patrol vehicle that is currently at Station 24. The new vehicle would function as a quad cab pick-up truck. TDFPD currently does not have a vehicle that can transport four personnel to certain events and trainings outside of the district and we want to avoid using the fire engines to transport personnel back and forth. The current pick-up truck is a 1994 and it is also well past its service life. If the board approves the purchase of two new vehicles, then the old ones will most likely be auctioned off later this year.

Trustee Kjer asked if this was for the current year.

Chief Antti replied yes, the purchase of the vehicles would be during this fiscal year, and then the outfitting of the vehicles would occur in next year's budget.

Trustee Kirschner motioned to approve the action item. Trustee Seibel seconded the motion.

Vice Chairman Felton asked if the district has located the vehicles or expects to locate these vehicles.

Chief Sharit responded that the district has located GMC trucks to purchase just like the current vehicle the Battalion Chiefs use.

Motion approved 5-0.

- 13. For Possible Action:** **Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution #03-2015 to identify the terms and conditions for fire department response away from their official duty station and assigned to an emergency incident under the California Fire Assistance Agreement (CFAA).**  
Fire Chief Ben Sharit

This is the last resolution to be approved by the board for the CFAA. This agreement will allow the fire district personnel listed to be compensated portal to portal while in the course of their employment and away from their official duty station, and assigned to an emergency incident.

Trustee Seibel motioned to approve the action item. Trustee Kirschner seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

- 14. For Possible Action:** **Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution #04-2015 - Promotion of the Lake Tahoe Basin Wildfire Awareness Month.**  
Fire Marshal Eric Guevin

Guevin stated that typically the state of Nevada celebrates Wildfire Awareness Month in May, however, with rain and snow occurring in May in Tahoe, TDFPD decided to move the wildfire awareness month to June which will include a Wildfire Expo. Guevin recommended that the board approve the proclamation for the wildfire awareness month to occur in June.

Chairman Schussel clarified that this resolution is for the basin's Wildfire Awareness *month* not *week*. "Week" was typed in the original document, which was a typo.

Chief Sharit added that he will send out information regarding the Wildfire Awareness Expo to the Trustees. The Expo is a collaboration between different agencies in Tahoe, and it will be held on Saturday June 20 in the TJ Maxx parking lot at the Y in South Lake Tahoe. Also, the Compost your Combustibles program is now open at the Heavenly Boulder Lodge parking lot and Chief Sharit encouraged the Trustees to spread the word to their neighbors in the district.

Guevin added that there will be a lot of media coverage coming up on the event. He has scheduled local radio and TV interviews as well as radio PSA's to promote awareness. Also, this Saturday there will be activities at the Boulder parking lot to promote the opening of the Compost your Combustibles program. Guevin added that the County Commissioners have voted to implement Level-1 drought conditions for Douglas County water system customers in the Tahoe Basin.

Trustee Kirschner motioned to approve the action item. Trustee Kjer seconded the motion.



No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

- 15. Report Item:** **Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution #05-2015 - Ambulance Rate Review and staff recommendation for an increase from \$975 to \$1,000 for BLS-NE, BLS-E, ALS-1 and from \$1,100 to \$1,150 for ALS-2 effective June 1, 2015.**  
Assistant Chief Tim Allison

The updated EMS cost analysis with the 2014 numbers resulted in an average transport cost of \$1,367 for one ambulance with six personnel. The average ambulance charge is \$1,477, which is based on data from the TDFPD ambulance billing provider Intermedix. The current charge for ALS-1 is \$975 and \$1,100 for ALS-2. The difference between an ALS 1 and 2 is the amount of interventions or equipment being used during the transport.

Vice Chairman Felton brought up his question from last month as to whether the district's objective should be to have a fixed rate or get to the point where our services are self-sufficient. And looking at the comparisons between TDFPD rates and other neighboring agencies rates, he sees that the district ambulance services are financially standing on its own, but only because of the tax on our local residents. Felton thinks the appropriate move is to have an increased rate where the ambulance services can be more self-sufficient.

Chief Allison added that the cost analysis was completed for one ambulance and 6 paramedics and the tax payers in the district are actually paying for 12 paramedics and two ambulances for an overall cost of \$2,270 to transport. Additionally, the fire district's average collection rates are much lower, about \$600 for all payer groups, \$1100 for private insurance, \$485 for Medicare and \$150 for Medicaid. It is a very wide range, and the people with private insurance end up paying more of their share in healthcare bills for everyone.

Chief Sharit added that the six cent tax override for paramedic services adopted in 1985 was to fund six paramedics, not twelve.

Trustee Kjer motioned to approve the action item. Trustee Kirschner seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

- 16. For Possible Action:** **Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution #06-2015 which designates four (4) Chief Officers authority to enter into a Cost Share Agreement on behalf of Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District in the event of major wildfire/urban interface fire event or other disaster within the fire district jurisdiction.**  
Fire Chief Ben Sharit

Legal Counsel Reese advised the board that items 16, 17 and 18 are all related and the chief can present them all together.

Chief Sharit stated that these documents are already in place, but must be updated with the fire district's current chief officers.

Resolution #06-2015 is to designate the four chief officers the authority to enter into cost share agreements on behalf of TDFPD in the event of a wildfire or other disaster.

Trustee Seibel motioned to approve the action item to adopt resolution #06-2015. Trustee Kirschner seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

- 17. For Possible Action:** **Discussion and possible action to adopt Resolution #07-2015 which designates four (4) Chief Officers the authority to sign a Transfer of Authorization "Delegation of Authority" on behalf of the Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District in the event of a major wildfire/urban interface fire event or other disaster within the fire district jurisdiction.**  
Fire Chief Ben Sharit

Resolution #07-2015 gives the ability to transfer authorization or delegate the authority on behalf of TDFPD to the chief officers in the event of an Incident Management Team (IMT) within the fire district.

Trustee Kirschner motioned to approve the action item to adopt resolution #07-2015. Trustee Kjer seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

- 18. For Possible Action:** **Discussion and possible action to adopt Resolution #08-2015 which designated two (2) Chief Officers the authority to institute a request for a "Declaration of Emergency" on behalf of the Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District in the event of a major wildfire/urban interface fire event or other disaster within the fire district jurisdiction.**  
Fire Chief Ben Sharit

Resolution #08-2015 authorizes the fire chief and the assistant chief the ability to request a declaration of emergency during a disaster. This allows TDFPD to access or apply for federal management emergency funding for disasters underneath the board's direction.

Trustee Kjer motioned to approve the action item to adopt resolution #08-2015. Trustee Seibel seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

**19. For Possible Action:** **Discussion and possible action to approve employer contribution of 4.9% for FICA alternative positions effective July 1, 2015 as approved by Resolution #02-2015.**

Fire Chief Ben Sharit

This action item allows the employer to contribute the equal 4.9 % for FICA alternative positions, similar to Social Security where the employee and the employer both contribute 50%.

Trustee Seibel motioned to approve the action item. Trustee Kirschner seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

**20. Report Item:** Review of Monthly Fire District Activities. No action will be taken.  
Fire Chief Ben Sharit

**Employee Recognition:**

Engineer Brad Petersen 8 Years of Service

**Updates:**

**Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser for injured Fresno Fire Captain Pete Dern** – Set up by Local 2441 Firefighters Association. This event raised approximately \$3,500 plus an anonymous donation of \$300. A check was sent to Captain Dern’s wife to help offset costs while she is not working. Chief Sharit recognized our firefighters and district residents who helped out.

Union President Captain Ralph Jones complimented **Captain Brian Zabel** for coordinating this event on behalf of all the Tahoe Douglas firefighters. Captain Zabel did a tremendous job.

**South Shore CEO Presentation on Wildfire Threat** - Requested by a CEO group of local business owners and leaders in order to have more information on wildfire threat this season. A panel of three fire chiefs in the Lake Tahoe basin was set up including USFS Fire Chief Kit Bailey, CalFire Assistant Chief Chris Anthony and South Lake Tahoe Fire Chief Jeff Meston. Chief Sharit and the new FS supervisor were the moderators. Discussed the threat of wildfire and natural disasters and how businesses can be self sufficient for at least the first 30 hours while emergency services are mitigating the emergency.

**CalFire Wildfire Seasonal Meeting** - Anticipating extreme drought throughout the west and the Lake Tahoe basin and preparations for all stations and units are set. TDFPD, USFS, NDF and CalFire are all staffing their equipment and units early for fire season.

**Recognized all TDFPD crews for efforts preparing for upcoming fire season** - Ladder/Truck Operations, Rope Rescue and Water Rescue trainings wrapped up this month. Engineer’s test is

coming up in June and July/August will have increase in emergency responses. Thanked all staff for their hard work and dedication.

Extension granted on the **2012 SAFER Grant** – Approximately \$500,000 left in the grant and we are able to access those funds next fiscal year after June 30th.

**2014 Retention Grant** – Still have not heard back, but FEMA is working on these applications; will keep posted on the status of this grant.

**\*NOTE: AUDIO RECORDING CUT OFF AT 1 HOUR, 7 MINUTES OF THE 1 HOUR 16 MINUTES TOTAL MEETING TIME. THE FOLLOWING WAS TRANSCRIBED FROM BOARD SECRETARY'S NOTES.**

**Resolution on the TDFD Ambulance and Emergency Services** - Recently had a second first reading at the Tahoe County Commissioners meeting and is now going through their process. They are aware that the TDFPD board has adopted their own resolution.

**Financial Summary** – CDs in the amount of \$599,881. One has matured; currently have 2 CDs for \$399,741 and the money market balance is \$538,850. CDs approved were to mature for cash re-service. Ad Valorem will not be coming in until September. Anticipate extra staffing and OT for the fire season.

**Attachments:**

**Media Outreach** efforts by Public Information Officer (PIO) Eric Guevin and Office Manager Kate Warner. TV appearances and radio interviews are scheduled for Guevin, and Warner is working on getting news stories for the fire district published in the Tahoe Daily Tribune.

**Social Media Trainings** – Continuing with efforts to reach out more to the public and district residents with these platforms ([www.facebook.com/tahoefire](http://www.facebook.com/tahoefire) & [www.twitter.com/tahoefire](http://www.twitter.com/tahoefire)).

Vice Chairman Felton wanted to thank TDFPD for supporting the **Tahoe Douglas Rotary Walk fundraiser for Polio awareness**. Rotary started efforts to eliminate Polio from the planet in 1985 and at that time 350,000 cases of Polio were reported; currently there are only 21 cases in the world.

**Congratulations to Captain Kevin Green and Captain Chris Lucas** and their recent promotions to Captain.

**The Zephyr Fire Crew is now fully staffed.**

**Congratulations to Assistant Chief Tim Allison.** He announced he will be retiring from TDFPD in the fall.

**21. Discussion:**

Confirm next meeting, with a proposed date of Wednesday, June 24, 2015 with a start time of 3:00pm and possible agenda items.

Rescheduled meeting date and time to Tuesday, June 30, 2015 at 12:00 pm as Chief Sharit will be out of town on June 24.

Suggested agenda items:

- N/A

**Adjourn.**

Trustee Kirschner motioned that the meeting be adjourned. Trustee Kjer seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

**Closed Session:** Not needed at this meeting.

This meeting was recorded on audio tape.

**Casey O'Neill**  
**BOT Secretary**  
**Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District**

APPROVED