

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
December 29, 2021

Those Present:

Chairman Larry Schussel
Vice Chairman Bill Kirschner
Trustee Kevin Kjer (Virtual)

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren
Trustee Janet Murphy
Trustee Greg Felton (Virtual)
Legal Counsel Jason Guinasso
(Virtual)

1. Call to Order.

Meeting was called to order at 2:37pm

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Schussel.

3. Roll Call.

Chairman Schussel, Vice Chairman Kirschner, Trustee Felton, Trustee Murphy and Trustee Kjer were present. A quorum was met.

4. Approval of the Agenda.

Trustee Kirschner made a motion to approve the agenda as written. Trustee Murphy seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

5. Public Comment.

None.

6. Board Trustee Comment.

Trustee Felton thanked the crews for assisting in clearing the record-breaking snowfall the District experienced in December.

7. Approval of the Consent Calendar.

Items:

- a. Board Meeting Minutes 11/17/2021
- b. Monthly Expenditures
- c. Extension on Annual Audit FY 2020-21

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Trustee Felton requested that the November meeting minutes reflect he attended virtually; and asked for an update on the District financials from the past six months.

Finance Manager Nolting stated that due to the delay of the audit, staff had to push back the usual schedule for receiving monthly financials. A planning meeting is scheduled in January with the District's accountants to discuss this and other related topics.

Trustee Felton addressed the timeline of the audit extension from the Department of Taxation and asked Counsel if board approval is required before a request for an extension made.

Legal Counsel Guinasso stated that the District staff includes the extension letter in the Consent Calendar as a matter of transparency, it is not necessary for the board to approve an extension.

Trustee Kirschner motioned to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. Trustee Murphy seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

8. For Possible Action: Consent items moved forward.

None.

9. Presentation:

Employee Recognition

Scott Lindgren 1 year of service

Mikayla Warner 2 years of service

10. For Discussion and Possible Action:

Discussion and possible approval of the Fire Chief's Annual Performance Evaluation.

Trustee Kirschner
Trustee Murphy

Trustee Kirschner stated that he and Trustee Murphy met with Chief Lindgren to discuss the evaluation comments from each trustee and the collective Performance Evaluation. He added, on behalf of the board, that the trustees were incredibly thankful to Chief Lindgren for his leadership this past year and look forward to what 2022 brings.

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Trustee Murphy concurred stating that Chief Lindgren is progressive, decisive and is very refreshing to work with. Overall, it has been an outstanding first year of service.

As part of the Fire Chief's Annual Performance Evaluation, Administrative Division Officer (ADO) Manager Warner recommended a change in the process for setting the Annual Board Goals. In the past, two trustees were selected to work with staff to establish these goals prior to the start of the budgeting process. Last October, Chief Lindgren initiated written expectations with each member of Command Staff which included goals for that Division and Division Head. He then directed each of his direct reports to roll out the same process with their Divisions and direct reports.

ADO Warner recommended the board adopt the same Expectations and Goal Setting process with the Fire Chief as part of the Annual Performance Review. A draft of possible goals was presented as follows:

1. Expand the Fuels Reduction Program through contracts and relationships with other agencies to reduce the risk of wildfire.
2. Implement a Career Development Plan to develop a highly trained workforce and to provide a clear path to advancement within and across Divisions.
3. Maintain general readiness of personnel and equipment at all times.
4. Continue to move forward on the viability of an aviation program to reduce the risk of wildfire to life, property, forest, wildlife and Lake Tahoe.
5. Continue to advance capital projects including ST22 & ST25 remodels; crew quarters (Senior Center); Public Safety Pier; fire station (Stateline); and mechanic shop.

ADO Warner shared that these goals were discussed with Trustees Kirschner and Murphy as part of the Fire Chief's annual review, but they were preliminary. Input from the rest of the board as well as additional topics are welcome, and should be directed to ADO Warner or Chief Lindgren. This topic will be placed on the February agenda for further discussion.

Trustee Felton asked if each trustee's evaluation for the Fire Chief was reviewed with him or just the summary.

ADO Warner stated that Fire Chief received both the individual evaluations and the collective evaluation put together by the Board representatives.

Trustee Kirschner motioned to approve the Fire Chief's Annual Performance Evaluation as presented. Trustee Murphy seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

11. Discussion and Possible Action:

Discussion and possible approval of the 2022 Board of Trustees meeting schedule with the monthly meeting date on the 3rd Wednesday of the month.

Chairman Schussel

It was clarified by staff that the June, November and December meetings are the last week of the month, not the 3rd Wednesday because of budget augmentations and audit deadlines respectively. The District accountant and auditors made the requests for the changes. The trustees requested that the December agenda be kept light, even limited to the audit topic only, to allow for a briefer meeting during the holiday period.

Trustee Kjer motioned to approve the 2022 Board of Trustees calendar with discussion to follow later in regards to the December meeting. Trustee Kirschner seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

12. For Discussion and Possible Action:

Discussion and possible action to nominate and appoint Board Officers for the 2022 Board of Trustees. (From the following nominees – Trustees Felton, Kjer, Kirschner, Murphy, and Schussel)

Chairman Schussel

Trustee Schussel nominated Trustee Kirschner as Chairman and Trustee Felton as Vice Chairman for the 2022 Tahoe Douglas Fire Board of Trustees.

Trustee Kirschner motioned to approve the Board Officers nominated. Trustee Murphy seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

13. For Discussion and Possible Action:

Discussion and possible action to approval of Resolution #14-2021 establishing a new Aviation Fund for the District budget.

Fire Chief Lindgren

Chief Lindgren communicated that per recommendations from the District accountants, auditors and legal counsel, the District will need to establish a separate bank account and budget fund for donations for an aviation program. The US Bank account that had been utilized previously for a NDF grant has been retitled as the 'Aviation Fund' and aviation program donations have been deposited into that account to separate monies from other District funds.

Trustee Felton suggested a change in the wording in the proposed resolution verbiage from *pursuing to investigating* an aviation program. He expressed the need to fully review all options before the District commits to a project of this size and magnitude.

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Trustee Kirschner stated that the District cannot rely on the federal or state agencies to implement this program for the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Trustee Kjer recommended that the District establish a committee to bring together other Tahoe agencies along with board trustees.

Finance Manager Nolting clarified that Resolution #14-2021 is to establish a set fund where the District can hold money that is currently being donated for the aviation program. Funds have come in and donors were eager to have the checks cashed before the end of the year.

Chairman Schussel also expressed his concerns with the aviation program and the impact of air traffic and noise in the neighborhoods.

Trustee Murphy stated that a Basin wide conversation is needed. In addition, she expressed that there are many financial needs to launch a program like this and keep it running once it has been established. Trustee Murphy requested the District create a monthly aviation financial report – funds needed, funds gained, checklist items, etc.

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren responded that he is very open to public concerns, which is why he has been talking about it so freely. Concerns have been expressed including environmental impact, noise, financial, day to day operational structure, personnel and equipment needed to make a program a reality. By no means is this program going to be a one and done project. It will need continuous financial support from other agencies and the community throughout the basin.

He also expressed, it is his duty to the District to provide the best lifesaving and firefighting methods to our area, and feels strongly that an aerial defense be included if feasible. He is aware it is a complicated proposition with limited land availability, mountain terrain, altitude, TRPA and other regulatory considerations. However, Resolution #14-2021 doesn't state that Tahoe Douglas Fire is committed to solely building the program; it states that the District is fully committed to collecting funds as transparently as possible. A dedicated fund in the budget gives credibility to the effort and encourages residents to ask questions, voice their concerns and put their money towards the program knowing that their donations are being managed by a trustworthy agency.

Legal Counsel Guinasso stated that the District staff should be the ones to establish a committee. If it is a board established committee it would be required to follow open meeting law.

Trustee Felton stated that he still is not okay with approving some of the verbiage in Resolution #14-2021 as it has been drafted and presented.

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Trustee Murphy asked what would happen to the funds if the program were not implemented, would the District have to give it back or could the funds shift to other needs.

Legal Counsel Guinasso stated that the Board can decide. The Board could reach out to the donors to return the funds, or they could propose a secondary option for what the money could be utilized for throughout the District.

ADO Warner restated that Resolution #14-2021 was drafted after discussion with our accountants, auditors and office staff. After the Caldor Fire, the community wants a place to put their money where they feel like they're helping make a difference towards preventing the next wildfire threat. In addition she also expressed her concern with a basin-wide committee, as our current committee for the Public Safety Pier has been established for years and it has been a very slow-moving process. To date, the District has been the primary driving force to keep that project on the table and trying to move forward as a group has been difficult.

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren stated that the verbiage used is to 'develop', that does not mean the District is the sole owner of the aviation program. At any time, other agencies throughout the basin are welcome to join the program. This resolution simply gives the District the authority to move forward with designating a fund to house the fundraising efforts in support of the Fire Rescue Helicopter.

Trustee Kirschner motioned to approve Resolution #14-2021 as presented. Trustee Murphy seconded the motion. Motion approved 4-1.

14. Report Item:

District Division Reports

Fire Marshal Eric Guevin
FMO Keegan Schafer
Admin Division Manager Kate Warner

Due to time, no Division Reports were given.

15. Report Item:

Review of Monthly Fire District Activities

Fire Chief Lindgren

Correction to US Bank Monthly Financial Summary – The US Bank checking account balance should read \$8,949,523.

16. Report Item:

OPERATION: Save the Tahoe Basin - Fire Rescue Helicopter Program

Fire Chief Lindgren

Chief Lindgren restated that this program is still being developed. Although the processes are not set in stone, he would like to move forward with the program. His intentions with implementing this program have been communicated with the public.

All the Trustees were in agreement with the risk and concerns and would like to have a better understanding of what the game plan is long term. Chief Lindgren added that two months ago direction was given to staff to add a separate report item on the agenda each month to keep the board up to date as research and plans progress; and that report will continue until further notice.

Public Comment:

None

Discussion:

Confirm next meeting, with a proposed date of **Wednesday, January 19, 2022** with a start time of 2:30p.m.

Adjourn

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APPROVED