

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
SIERRA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

TUESDAY

2:00 P.M.

APRIL 28, 2009

PRESENT:

David Humke, Chairman
Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairperson
John Breternitz, Commissioner
Kitty Jung, Commissioner

Amy Harvey, County Clerk
Katy Simon, County Manager
Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel
Michael Greene, Fire Chief

ABSENT:

Bob Larkin, Commissioner

The Board convened at 3:18 p.m. in regular session in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada, and conducted the following business:

CONSENT AGENDA – AGENDA ITEMS 2A THROUGH 2G

Michael Greene, Fire Chief, indicated Agenda Item 2E, approval of agreement for use of the old Mount Rose Ski Lodge, would be pulled.

09-19SF AGENDA ITEM 2A

Agenda Subject: “Approval of Agenda for April 28, 2009 Board of Commissioners Meeting.”

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Breternitz, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Larkin absent, Chairman Humke ordered that Agenda Item 2A be approved.

09-20SF AGENDA ITEM 2B

Agenda Subject: “Chief Report.”

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Breternitz, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Larkin absent, Chairman Humke ordered that Agenda Item 2B be approved.

09-21SF AGENDA ITEM 2C

Agenda Subject: “Approval of operating agreement with the U.S. Forest Service.”

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Breternitz, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Larkin absent, Chairman Humke ordered that Agenda Item 2C be approved.

09-22SF AGENDA ITEM 2D

Agenda Subject: “Approval of raising capital limit from \$3,000 to \$10,000.”

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Breternitz, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Larkin absent, Chairman Humke ordered that Agenda Item 2D be approved.

09-23SF AGENDA ITEM 2F

Agenda Subject: “Approval of volunteer/auxiliary report for February 2009.”

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Breternitz, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Larkin absent, Chairman Humke ordered that Agenda Item 2F be approved.

09-24SF AGENDA ITEM 2G

Agenda Subject: “Approval of minutes for February 10, 2009 meeting.”

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Breternitz, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Larkin absent, Chairman Humke ordered that Agenda Item 2G be approved.

Agenda Subject: “Board discussion and possible direction regarding citizen group recommendations to construct a fire station to improve service and lower response times for a currently underserved portion of the Sierra Fire Protection District (SFPD) and improve automatic aid response to a currently underserved portion of the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD).”

Michael Greene, Fire Chief, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk, highlighting the station justification, response-time impact, fire station location map, staffing and equipment, station construction options, community input and recommendations.

Commissioner Breternitz asked how this fit with the current study being conducted. Chief Greene replied the current study would validate and confirm the importance and need for a station in that area. However, the more complex issue would be the ultimate configuration of how the Sierra Fire Protection District (SFPD) and the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) consolidations and mergers existed in the future. He said that would be deferred to the consultants for recommendation. Commissioner Breternitz said he was not aware the failed vote was a vote for a station on the suggested property. Chief Greene remarked it was the same proposal. He stated after the bond failed, a post-election analysis was conducted that showed the citizens in the area supported the bond; however, citizens in outlying areas opposed the bond because they saw no direct benefit. Chief Greene explained the new proposal was less expensive and kept the momentum moving forward for the citizens who wanted a station built in that area.

Commissioner Breternitz asked if the consultant was hired prior to the November election. Chief Greene replied the consultants were hired after the election. He commented he did not know if they agreed with the location, but that location was used for the basis of a study completed prior to the election that concerned the station location and service delivery followed by a second study that confirmed the same need.

In response to the call for public comment, Paul Wagner, City of Reno Fire Chief, remarked the SFPD and a citizens group were proposing a new fire station in the Saddlehorn/Arrowcreek area. He said the City of Reno Fire Department staff believed that the Comprehensive Fire and Fire-Based Emergency Medical Services Master Plan from Diamante Partners, LLC should be completed and presented to the Board of Fire Commissioners before any action was taken on the planning options of this new station. Chief Wagner said Diamante Partners was in the process of developing a comprehensive fire and fire-based emergency medical service master plan that would include:

1. Perform analysis of current operations, and review appropriate standards for community fire operations and fire based emergency response to include a review of current operations and existing conditions, contracts and deployment of each fire department and organization. In addition, a review of

appropriate standards for community fire operations and fire-based emergency response would be conducted;

2. To conduct standards of response cover deployment analysis to include the development of a “Standard of Cover Deployment Analysis” for Washoe County and the departments and agencies within the County. National Fire Protection Association, Insurance Services Organizations (ISO), fire and life safety codes and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards would be reviewed and incorporated and/or would serve as the guidelines by which department decisions about distribution, concentration and staffing of line companies;
3. Develop financial analysis of cost related to addressing critical deficiencies and consider, evaluate and recommend financing mechanisms. This task would include standards of cover analysis, given the direction of the locally elected official; and,
4. Develop and complete a final report and recommendations. Once all materials had been received the Diamante Partners would create a Master Plan Analysis report. This report would form the basis for their approach to finalize the Fire and Fire-Based EMS Master Plan.

Chief Wagner concluded this comprehensive master plan would help elected officials and fire staff plan to improve services to the citizens in Washoe County. He said it would include all of Washoe County and all of the financial implications. Chief Wagner believed when the Diamante Partners completed their study the Board would have a complete picture from which a decision could be made.

Sara Thomas discussed the response times and the failure of the bond passing during the November election. She said the citizen group put forth solutions and asked the Board to act swiftly to correct the critical deficiency in the southwest suburban area of the County.

Donna Peterson stated she was concerned about citizen safety and response times in St. James Village. She provided statistics for fire and emergency responses and urged the Board to support the measures proposed by the citizens.

Larry Leovick indicated an excellent location had been identified for the badly needed fire station. He said a complete design was available that could be expanded to accommodate future growth allowing for a second engine company. He said waiting for stimulus monies that may never arrive was not a responsible option and urged the Board to move forward.

Ed LaPelusa stated fire stations cost money even if they were built on County-owned land. He said to reduce costs it was being proposed to use construction drawings and specifications from existing fire stations currently in use in Washoe

County. Mr. LaPelusa said citizens affected were the ones who voted for the bond to improve their protection, and would do so again.

Dr. Bob Parker stated the citizens needed the Board's help to ensure their homes and families safety. He said the response to fires and emergencies in the area were twice as long as the national standard. Dr. Parker commented homes had been lost because professionals paid to help the community were too far away to respond effectively. He said a fire station was needed and remarked citizens had worked with the District to develop options to bring response times in the area to eight minutes or less. He urged the Board to move forward with the proposal and adopt the recommendations.

Chairman Humke read a statement from Karen Mullen, which was placed on file with the Clerk.

In response to statements from Ms. Mullen, Chief Greene explained insurance companies and insurance company rates were based on the proximity of the property to the fire station or the entire district classification.

Commissioner Jung asked if this needed to be taken up with the County Manager and City of Reno Manager. She felt for this to move forward in any form of timeliness, the Board and the Reno City Council should direct both Fire Chiefs to come together and find a workable option. Commissioner Jung suggested this be placed on the upcoming joint meeting agenda.

Chairman Humke said he would speak to Reno Mayor Cashell and City of Reno leadership on the basis of the benefits this station could have to the City.

Commissioner Breternitz stated a project of this nature took a large amount of time. He encouraged the citizen group and Chief Greene to work with County staff. He remarked, in terms of fully supporting this, he was hesitant to make final steps until there was feedback from the consultant. Commissioner Breternitz said the intent was to find the best coverage for the County which would likely involve a new station; however, he wanted this project to be completed without regret.

Commissioner Weber said there were things needed to be taken into consideration. She asked if there was direction to give and hoped that the citizens understood the Board needed to review the recommendations with the consultant.

Commissioner Jung moved to accept the report of the citizen group and direct the SFPD and County staff to continue to work with the citizen group to analyze the feasibility of steps one through three, and develop an implementation plan for Board review and possible action. She further moved to have this discussion agendized for the joint meeting scheduled in May with the City of Reno, and for the County Manager and the Chairman to lay the groundwork so the City was current on the issues and the potential benefits to the City.

Katy Simon, County Manager, clarified there was a proposed joint meeting agenda for May and, if possible, would attempt to place this item on that agenda.

Commissioner Jung amended the motion and stated if it were not possible to place this item on the joint meeting agenda for May she would urge to have this placed on the City Council agenda so they could move forward. Commissioner Weber seconded the motion.

Commissioner Breternitz indicated he was supportive of the general concept of the motion; however, felt it was premature to identify the funding process. He said in terms of a potential funding source for this project the funding steps did not include the City of Reno. Commissioner Breternitz said it would be beneficial to the City; therefore, was hesitant to agree to a motion. He felt the Board should move forward with studying the feasibility, the financing and working with the City to move ahead, but did not think the steps should begin in starting the sale of the property at this stage. He stated he would not support the motion.

In all due respect, Chairman Humke said if he voted for this he would not wish to establish a precedent each time a change was requested in the County's Fire District so that the County would have to go through the Reno Fire Department.

On call for the question, the motion passed with a 3 to 1 vote with Commissioner Breternitz voting "no" and Commissioner Larkin absent.

09-26SF AGENDA ITEM 4

Agenda Subject: "Discussion and possible approval of an interlocal agreement between the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) and the Sierra Fire Protection District (SFPD) regarding costs and use of the WCSO firefighting capable helicopter."

Michael Greene, Fire Chief, indicated this was a year-long project concerning the various entities contributing to the operational costs of the helicopter. He said this was a positive step with joint contributions to make the program a success.

There was no public comment on this item.

On motion by Commissioner Breternitz, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Larkin absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 4 be approved, authorized and executed.

09-27SF AGENDA ITEM 5

Agenda Subject: "Discussion and possible approval of the Health Benefits Programs for SFPD employees, retirees, and dependants for FY 2009/10, for an approximate

cost of \$465,000, and authorize Fire Chief to execute insurance contracts and service agreements necessary to continue the Programs.”

Michael Greene, Fire Chief, explained this was a collaborative effort through the Association to arrive at the best health care plan for the District.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Breternitz, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Larkin absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5 be approved and authorized.

09-28SF AGENDA ITEM 6

Agenda Subject: “Commissioners’/Managers Announcements, Requests for Information, Topics for Future Agendas and Statements Relating to Items Not on the Agenda. (No discussion among Commissioners will take place on this item.)”

Commissioner Weber requested page numbers be placed on bottom of each page of the backup to make it easier to locate a page that was being discussed.

Michael Greene, Fire Chief, announced a citizen evacuation for the Galena area was scheduled for May 16, 2009.

09-29SF AGENDA ITEM 7

Agenda Subject: “Public Comment and discussion thereon. The Sierra Fire Protection District Board of Directors welcomes courteous and respectful public comment and input. Due to the amount of business the District Board conducts, public comment is limited to two minutes per person.”

Bob Ackerman spoke on the emergency response that occurred when his wife became ill. He said with all due respect to Reno Fire Chief Paul Wagner, this was an important proposal and a matter of life and death.

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4:16 p.m. There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Commissioner Weber, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Larkin absent, Chairman Humke ordered that the meeting be adjourned.

DAVID HUMKE, Chairman
Sierra Fire Protection District

ATTEST:

AMY HARVEY, Washoe County Clerk
and Ex Officio Clerk, Sierra
Fire Protection District

*Minutes Prepared by:
Stacy Gonzales, Deputy County Clerk*