

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

September 9, 2009

Regular Meeting

Those Present:

Frank Forvilly

Steve Seibel

R.J. Clason

Brad Dorton

Roy Clason

Chief LeFever

Bob Cook

Assistant Chief Ogami

Assistant Chief Mark Novak

Battalion Chief Ben Sharit

Battalion Chief Dave Hekhuis

Leo Horton

Captain Chuck Salerno

Captain Rich Nalder

Engineer Glenn Sanders

Paramedic Kelly Pettit

Paramedic Chris Peterson

1. Action Item: Call to order.-

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 by Chairman Steve Seibel.

2. Action Item: Pledge of Allegiance.

Pledge of allegiance was led by Trustee R.J. Clason.

3. Action Item: Roll call.

All board members were present.

4. Action Item: Public comment.

There was none.

5. Action Item: Discussion and possible action: Approval of consent calendar:

Items appearing on the Consent Calendar are action items generally heard without discussion and adopted with one vote for the entire calendar. Trustees or members of the public may have any consent item pulled and placed on the Administrative Agenda so that the item may be heard and receive public comment. Members of the public requesting that item(s) be pulled shall do so during the Public Comment segment at the beginning of the meeting.

Item:

a. Approval of agenda.

b. Approval of minutes 8-5-09.

Motion by Trustee Roy Clason to approve the consent calendar items a. and b., the approval of the minutes from 8-5-09, and the agenda of 9-9-09.

Motion was seconded by Trustee Brad Dorton.

Motion carried with a vote of 5-0.

Action Item #6: *Consent Items moved forward.*

There were none.

Item #7: *Discussion: Review of monthly expenditures.*

Chief LeFever stated he identified some of the expenditures over the past five to six weeks. Due to the change in our scheduling we had a larger payroll and accounts payable. He pulled out the Emergency Vehicle Bomb Squad which was summarized in three or four checks. Why that was broken out that added up to \$27,597 was due to the fact that they go to a 2007 grant, a 2008 grant and a partial amount we paid. We did this to have a clean accounting of each grant when we do the audit.

Bank of America credit card bill has some strike team reimbursement costs included in this. There is only one check but made up of numerous charges by the various chief officers. One the check register the accounts are broken out on the right showing which accounts the charges go to.

John Pickett - \$7,150.00. This was put in to show that when we fill this position, that position will be refunded to us from the SNMPLA funds, grant funds between 50-70%. The first month we paid him \$4,000 and billed The Nevada Fire Safe Council for \$3,100. We should be getting at least \$4,000 back for the \$7,150. When we close the books on the monthly basis Chief LeFever will show the actual costs to the district. This amount comes out of the Fuels Fund.

Trustee Dorton asked if that is an approximate monthly wage.

Chief LeFever stated that the \$7,150 was on high side.

Harvey's Hotel – This was the balance of Rick Nicholson's retirement party. This party grew from 80 people to well over 100.

Trustee Roy Clason asked what the total cost was.

Chief LeFever informed him it was \$2,200 to \$2,400.

Paul Stein - \$5,850. Some questions came up from board members. Going back to January when Paul Stein came in it was a different kind of class. This payment is for a class for a new evaluation program we want to develop. Chief LeFever gave the board a summary of the class details and may eliminate some of the questions and concerns. We got the cart before the horse

in as much as when Paul sent the invoice we paid it. The class will not take place until November. Paul Stein is in the process of developing the new evaluation program for us.

Trustee R.J. Clason stated he was surprised to see this in his packet as a personal service contract that had already been paid in light of the discuss we had several months ago on what he thought was the boards consensus on personal/professional service contract items be brought to the board in advance whenever possible. He was surprised to see it in there especially with the high dollar amount of \$6,000 without explanation. The document that was distributed to the board was helpful but he is wondering if it takes 24 hours of this person's time doing the three shifts plus whatever prep time he has already invested in this program and training session. Is that the best use of the districts funds? Development plans are critically important to each employee's development, etc. Can an employee really sit through eight hours of that and is it necessary and also to spend \$6,000 on this.

Chief LeFever said what he thinks needs to be understood is are these classes always eight hours and understand the way we have shift coverage responsibilities we split our days also. Our shifts are split in half but the instructor remains and this takes place three times. You are only talking about four hours potentially. What is important about this conversation is a little side note to the agenda item; this is a \$6,000 investment in our personnel. He is getting the feeling that there is a question of the \$6,000 and there is not a person in this room that is not concerned with the funding of the organization. An example was given to the board and tried to explain that over the past three years what the organization has tried to do with decreasing revenues but we still have to maintain our personnel so it comes down to value. He puts a lot of credence in what Chief Ogami recommends and what the Company Officers recommend. This recommendation did not come from him it came from his Chief Officers. Two years ago there was an training overtime budget of \$34,000 and we spent \$17,000 (50%); training budget was \$54,000 and spent \$21,552 (40%). This will show a pattern in 2008 and 2009 we spent 40% and 56%. We are going to provide Company Officer training because if we don't we are going to face issues that will cost us far more than \$6,000. The training budget remains at \$50,000.

Trustee Brad Dorton asked can you project how much the overtime budget for training will be for 2009/2010 and the balances in this fund in the past, does that go back into the ending fund balance.

Chief LeFever said it does go back into the ending fund balance or we can use it in other areas. We are at a day to day staffing level and he has had discussions with the Chief Officers every single day on where we are at and we don't take this lightly. This money goes into overtime which is broken out into different categories. If we overspend in one area and under spend in another we can move the money into different areas.

We are in the third month of the new budget. We have not received our first CTX check. He anticipates because of the projections they have given us are about \$130,000 below what our last year's actual was given that there is no simple answer to this question.

Chairman Steve Seibel said he thinks the concern was due to Paul Stein and the date of the invoice. He feels the review process was ignored and if the explanation was presented last

month it would have been much easier. This is why we need to look ahead on these issues instead of having a knee-jerk reaction. The sheet distributed in very helpful but giving it to the board last month would have answered a bunch of questions for the board. He cannot tell the Chief (as a board member) what type of training needs to be done. The board has to trust the Chief to do the right thing.

Chief LeFever agreed with Chairman Siebel and also said that he knew the class wasn't until November but he accepts full responsibility for cutting the check as it came through the process.

Chairman Seibel understands there may be items that slip by but the buzz word is "Paul Stein".

Chief LeFever stated he put this in his review of monthly expenditures for a reason. It is all transparent here.

Trustee Roy Clason stated he called Chief LeFever this morning and questioned him about this cost after the previous go around and feel good session and how we all felt about this and continued to tell him that either it is the most egregious lapse of judgment that he has ever seen or you were flipping off the board. The thought occurred that Paul Stein might be related to someone. Looking at Paul Steins services, if in fact it is 24 hours, his cost is \$243.00 per hour. If it is only four hours as you say instead of eight that comes to \$500.00 per hour for his cost. As all of us know when you in a period of austerity you tend to cut back. You give up caviar and go to cheese and crackers. Paul Stein sounds like caviar. For a lot less than \$5,800 he could have made a DVD and sent it to every single person. His concern is that we need to do some selective surgery. If you read the Wall Street Journal this morning got the sense that Harvey's and Harrah's may be on the short list here. If those shut down we are in a heap of hurt.

Trustee Frank Forvilly said in support of this, he has been here longer than anyone else. We went through some times that the department made some big mistakes. To him, this type of training is the best thing that we can do. We spent a lot of money on attorneys and appraisals in the past. If we would have had this training seven years ago we would not have been in the situation that we have been. The proper way to discipline a person is very important. This is money well spent. The intention of this is to ensure that everyone is properly trained.

Trustee Roy Clason said, on the other hand, we have not had any lawsuits in the six years he has been on the board so to him that means the Captains have been doing a pretty good job without Paul Stein's expertise.

Chief LeFever said he feels this comes down to a philosophy of where to spend the money and statistics are what they are. The reality is this is about \$110 per employee. That is a cheap investment in your people.

Trustee R.J. Clason said he is all for investing in personnel and putting a lot of time in recruiting the best and the brightest and maintaining them and their proficiency. You work with an HR firm with sexual harassment training, etc. It seems that maybe it does work out to \$110 per person but is there somebody else besides Paul Stein that does this, is there somebody that does by webcast, by DVD, a more efficient way to do it. When you put this in context the \$6,000

doesn't sound like much at first blush it is one of those surprising things. A follow up question is: If you are one of us and you are hit up by a taxpayer at Safeway that said, I heard you guys just spent \$6,000 on a trainer for a day, R.J, how can you justify that? You have to help the board to be educated.

Chief LeFever says we have been down this road using the canned program such as the one we are using now. We have had training on how to give proper evaluations through our POOL/PACT people. What that doesn't give us is the individualization, the job descriptions of Tahoe Douglas, the commitment by our Company Officers to a program that they are part of. Our people will be involved.

Trustee R.J. Clason asked who else does teaching of this type.

Chief LeFever said his last experience was through POOL/PACT. The instructor came in, take our program and tell us what is good and what is bad and how we can improve that. We are looking for a complete change from what we have done the past twelve years.

Trustee Brad Dorton asked is there is a way that we can measure the results and see if this class has met the objectives or the expected results that you are striving for.

Chief LeFever stated there absolutely was. You need to have results on everything you do.

Trustee Brad Dorton asked so how do you measure the value of this class?

Trustee Frank Forvilly said they need to bring some of the people taking the class their feelings. They will be able to state what type of help they have gotten from the class.

Chief LeFever said it is important to note that there are three Captains that are developing this. One year will be a bit premature because there is a lot of individual development we are requesting from our people. We are trying to mix this in with our task books. If this is a recommendation from the board, we can definitely do this.

Trustee Brad Dorton asked how often the evaluations will be implemented.

Chief LeFever said we are still looking at every year. They are very labor intensive but what they do is define an individual's career.

Trustee Brad Dorton asked what does Paul Stein recommend, is it annual?

Chief LeFever did not know.

Trustee Brad Dorton said this is part of the class. I wonder if upward evaluations would be a consideration. Would that be a way to measure the success of this program? A large number of organizations do upward evaluations.

Battalion Chief Sharit said he sits on the oversight committee for POOL/PACT and our quarterly meeting was this morning. The review of last year was that there is a large increase in litigation among school districts and special districts throughout the State of Nevada. The increase seems to be due to the fiscal economic times due to people losing their jobs. They have a long range plan for training of sexual harassment workplace violence and appraisal programs, etc. Also, he believes we are in mid-process of this now. The Captains bought into Paul Stein and they believe in him, gave him power to come up with a program much better than what we have. If we stop them we will just go backwards.

Bob Cook he supports what Frank Forvilly had to say. The fire department is constantly training. They train on something different every day. You have to give them the tools to do their job. That doesn't mean on the floor that means for the managers to access the personnel in order to help them in their careers. He feels that this department is one of the best in the area because of the training they have received in the past. You as a board should not tie the Chiefs hands. We are talking about \$6,000 here. It is not a lot of money and the Chief shouldn't have to take a raft over this. He is just doing his job. He is one of the best Chiefs we have had in the last thirty years. Give him a break.

Trustee R.J. Clason had a question for Bob Cook. You used to be a firefighter and you served with great distinction for many years on this board. How much should be spent on this training program and how much would you say is too much. Is \$20,000 to much, is \$30,000?

Bob Cook replied that Van Ogami is not spending his budget. He feels he should spend it on whatever kind of training they need.

Should he spend whatever is in the budget?

Bob Cook, if he has \$75,000 in the budget, if this particular year he only needs to spend \$20,000 let him. If next year something comes up and he needs to spend a little more, let him. It is in his budget. He is not saying he should spend it just because it is in his budget but he has the right to do it.

The whole department has been frugal with the money and should be commended on that but as a taxpayer, how much is too much?

Bob Cook, I don't think \$6,000 is too much. We are talking about an evaluation program for all the staff. What they have is obviously antiquated. They have used it for twelve years. Lake Valley is going to adopt this and what other Fire Departments around the lake are going to adopt it? They seem to follow suit. What one department does, generally most of them do? He anticipates the rest of them doing this too.

Trustee Frank Forvilly said that education is cheap. If you get someone here with knowledge to help you develop a program.

Chairman Steve Seibel said three to four years ago Park Cattle Company had not program what-so-ever. We went through the process of developing a new system. It cost way more than

\$6,000. It is a situation where he agrees with Frank and Bob. It is a program that will be amortized over at least 10 years and doesn't understand what the heartburn is.

Trustee Brad Dorton asked Van Ogami was wondering what other companies have the technology that Paul Stein is coming up with over the next few years that we will be looking at. He wants to know what other cutting edge technology Paul Stein is developing.

Chief Ogami told Trustee Dorton that we have in the past had instructors here for a five day course. Nothing was gained. People said they took the class just to get the certificate. Paul Stein has done a great deal for us.

Trustee Brad Dorton said that was part of the problem with the last class he taught. What was the result of that class? Were they measurable? Was there any feedback? He has not heard any feedback or anything measurable from the last class. In the future, we need to have measurable results so we can say "yeah – that class was worth it because look what it has done for us as an organization".

Chief LeFever said that was fair and on a comfort level for the board some comparative expenditures i.e. Robert May.

Trustee Roy Clason said that on the other end of the spectrum, if we lose one million dollars in a year on revenue, it is difficult to tell the five or six firefighters that we are laying off that we have been absolutely prudent in our expenditures over the past year.

Trustee R.J. Clason stated the last thing he wanted to do was micro-manage the Chief or his team. He continued to say that all investments in personnel training are the best investments any one can make. It seems like a lot of money. He hopes there is good value and the best use of funds.

Chairman Steve Siebel finished by saying that being given the explanation to the board last month would have helped tremendously.

Item #8: Presentation: Fire Chiefs report of previous months activities.

Special recognition: Chief Van Ogami for 30 years of service, Captain Rich Nalder, 29 years of service and Captain Gordon Paul for 22 years of service.

There were a total of 157 alarms for the month of July.

Ambulance account:

In the month of July we transported 77 patients. This is 18% less than June of last year. We billed \$95,276 and collected \$42,656. The collection rate is 67.89%.

Receivables:

2009/10 Strike Team- we billed \$235,932 and have been paid \$137,195. Money is still outstanding is \$98,737.

EOD Grant money is still outstanding is \$27,500.

The money market balance is \$600,286 and the interest rate is at .01%.

Legal issues:

There are no legal issues to report.

Action Item #9: Discussion and possible action: Set date for next meeting and possible agenda items.

Motion by Trustee Roy Clason to hold the next meeting on October 7, 2009.

Possible agenda items:

- Wayne Omel, Edward Jones presentation.

Motion seconded by Trustee Brad Dorton.

Motion carried with a vote of 5-0.

Action Item #10: Adjourn.

Motion by Trustee Frank Forvilly adjourn.

Seconded by Trustee Roy Clason.

Motion carried with a vote of 5-0

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

This meeting was recorded on audio tape.