

**TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
September 21, 2011**

**Those Present:**

Chairperson Brad Dorton

Trustee RJ Clason

Trustee Ann Grant

Trustee Kevin Kjer

Trustee Steve Seibel

Interim Fire Chief Van Ogami

Fire Marshal Mark Novak

Battalion Chief Dave Hekhuis

Battalion Chief Ben Sharit

Captain Rick Strickley

Engineer Chris Lucas

FF/P Kevin Green

FF/P Brad Petersen

Mechanic Gregg Gemmet

Forester John Pickett

Administrative Aid Carrie Nolting

Administrative Assistant Kate Warner

Guest Bob Cook

**1. Action Item:        *Call to order.***

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Chairman Brad Dorton.

**2. Action Item:        *Pledge of Allegiance.***

Pledge of allegiance was led by Bob Cook.

**3. Action Item:        *Roll call.***

Chairman Brad Dorton, Trustee RJ Clason, Trustee Ann Grant, Trustee Kevin Kjer and Trustee Steve Seibel were all present.

**4. Action Item:        *Public comment.***

There was no comment.

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

Items:

- a. Approval of agenda.
- b. Approval of Minutes 08/24/11.
- c. Approval of Financial Statements 06/30/11.

Trustee Seibel moved to approve the consent calendar items as submitted. Trustee Grant seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried with a vote of 5-0.

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

There were none.

**7. Presentation:           Chimney Rock Fire Safe Chapter Acknowledgements  
Bob Cook, Project Coordinator**

Bob Cook read a letter on behalf of the Chimney Rock Fire Safe Chapter acknowledging the efforts of Chief Mark Novak, Forester John Pickett, Supervisor Keegan Schafer and the members of the Zephyr Crew. Who promptly addressed a Chimney Rock resident's concern over a ½ acre lot owned by Douglas County on Pine Drive, which was in serious need of defensible space work. The lot was cleaned up by the Zephyr Crew and the resident and neighborhood were very appreciative. Forester John Pickett confirmed that such projects fall under the annual lease agreement with Douglas County to clear at least 6 acres in exchange for the use of Logging Lane.

**8. Possible Action:    Appointment of New Fire Chief**

Trustees Seibel and Clason updated the Board that time constraints had prohibited the completion of the contract negotiations.

Trustee Seibel made a motion to appoint Battalion Chief Ben Sharit as Interim Fire Chief. Trustee Clason seconded the motion. Discussion: Trustee Grant agreed that the motion would allow Chief Sharit to proceed. Trustee Clason further added that the negotiations were important and should not be rushed. Motion carried 5-0.

**9. Action Item:           Approval of Fire Chief Contract**

Trustee Clason stated that since Chief Sharit had just received a draft of the contract on 9/20/11 there had not been sufficient time a for review and apparently there may be some items that are out dated. It was preferred to take some additional time and get it right. Trustee Clason moved to postpone the approval of the Fire Chief agreement until the next board meeting. Trustee Kjer seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried 5-0.

**10. Possible Action Item:   Residential Requirement for Fire Chief**

Trustee Clason paused to acknowledge the now former Interim Fire Chief, Van Ogami, for stepping in and doing a great job. Chief Ogami said it was his pleasure to serve and added that TDFD is an outstanding company to be part of and to be at this level for the shortest period of time in TD history was an honor.

Chairman Dorton confirmed that the residential requirement is currently 75 miles. Trustee Seibel felt that the distance should be based from Station #3 as it was central in the district and that distance should probably be 30 miles.

Chief Sharit added that distance was not really the issue, but the time it takes to travel. The 75 mile distance was a contract negotiations point. He recalled that it started at 25 miles and has expanded over the years.

Chairman Dorton agreed that he too recalled that it began at 25 miles and has expanded for all employees. However, for the Fire Chief, there may be a need to respond quicker to Station #3.

Chief Sharit reiterated that a time situation is easier to evaluate, and asked what an acceptable amount of time is for the Board.

Chief Ogami added that if the Fire Chief has done a proper job with training and succession planning, then the Fire Chief really does not need to be part of the incident. For example, when looking at the incidents that have occurred in Northern Nevada in the last few weeks, if the Fire Chief has done his job the Chief Officers will be handling the situation at a tactical level. The Fire Chief will come in eventually and after he has been briefed and is up to speed on the incident will be the liaison to the public, the person the public would want to see in front of the microphone. The Fire Chief does not need to be going Code 3 to an incident only to put it in "park".

Trustee Seibel said those points were well taken, because clearly there will be times when the Fire Chief is not available, out of town on vacation for example.

Trustee Grant added that if you restrict the mileage to a smaller area it may discourage employees and take away opportunities for them and/or force an expensive move down the line. It is not an issue now, and she does not want the mileage to be prohibitive to the up and coming employees.

Trustee Kjer stated that his greatest desire would be to have the Fire Chief be part of the community, however, realistically that may not be possible. So, if he can't be seen at the post office every day it is not as important. One can also become part of the community by serving with the Rotary, or such organizations.

Trustee Clason agreed with Chief Ogami's remarks as to who is really running an emergency incident and that those individuals need to be prepared. There are times where the Fire Chief title is expected; media opportunity or briefing to say public officials, even though the emergency situation may be running smoothly the expectation is for the Fire Chief's presence.

Trustee Grant added that in those emergency situations, when they do pull someone from incident command to address the public, sometimes it is too soon and information is not accurate. So having the Fire Chief accessible immediately may not be a very good situation.

Chief Sharit pointed out 30 - 75 miles really makes no difference today, all the Chief Officers are within those distances. In the future it can be addressed again for the needs at that time. For the time being, he plans on being back up for the District calls as needed.

Chairman Dorton had another suggestion that residency be in Douglas or Eldorado counties. Others commented that the counties are actually quite large.

Trustee Seibel reiterated that it is a non-issue at this time. Trustee Clason was told by Chief LeFever that the 75 miles was arbitrary. Trustee Grant had asked Chief LeFever if he had to be at an incident immediately, and he said no.

Trustee Kjer noted that we did have a former board member present, and asked Bob Cook if he cared to comment.

Cook remembered that the distance was expanded at the union's request and when he was a firefighter here one had to live in District. His personal opinion was that 30 miles was probably the best option for the District. He feels that the District expects to see the Fire Chief in the District every day.

Trustee Clason moved to change the residential requirement not to exceed 35 miles, or 1 hour in normal drive conditions. Trustee Seibel seconded the motion. Discussion was that it was too vague. Trustee Clason amended his motion to "not to exceed 35 miles" only. No discussion. Motion carried 5-0.

**11. Item: Update Signatures on the Financial Accounts**  
**Chief Ben Sharit**

With any change over in Board Trustees or Chief Officers, it is necessary to update the signature lists on the bank and investment accounts. The minutes will reflect the following:

**US Bank Accounts** Board Trustees Clason, Dorton and Seibel  
Chief Officers Hekhuis, Novak and Sharit  
Chairman Dorton and Chief Sharit will be the signatures on the A/P and payroll checks

**Edward Jones Investment Accounts** Board Trustees Clason, Dorton, Grant, Kjer and Seibel  
Chief Officers Hekhuis, Novak and Sharit

**Wells Fargo Accounts** Chief Officers Hekhuis, Novak and Sharit

The signature cards will be updated immediately.

**12. Item:                      Review of Monthly Expenditures  
Chief Ben Sharit**

Questions:

- Bank of America – \$16,578 is the full amount paid to the credit card, and 89% of that figure is from the Zephyr Crew fire assignment.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Check #</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>Reason</b>
08/23/2011	52751	Bank of America	\$16,578.97	All	89%-Zephyr Crew to New Mexico fire
09/01/2011	52770	Justin Rossi	\$73.04	General	Reimbursement-Dr. visit, return to work
09/01/2011	52773	Matt Brown	\$136.55	General	Reimbursement-Fuel for strike team response
09/01/2011	52786	Tom Goldston Roofing	\$2410.00	General	Repair of Station 3 roof
09/01/2011	52788 52789	UNR Extended Studies	\$1666.00 \$833.00	Fuels	REMSA medic school-delayed invoices from the school
09/07/2011	52806	Grant Thornton	\$10,600.00	General	Audit
09/14/2011	52831	Harvey's Resort	\$600.00	General	Retirement/Promotion dinner deposit
09/14/2011	52838	Petroleum Maintenance	\$1364.70	General	New Gas Pump @ Station 5

- UNR is a billing for two months.
- The Retirement, Service Awards and Promotional Dinner is at Harvey's Resort and information was distributed to the board members.

**13. Discussion:              Fire Chief's report on previous month's activities.**

**Service Recognition**

Captain Rich Nalder                      31 Years of Service  
 FF/P Jenny Alustiza                      1 Year of Service  
 FF/P Tim Egan                              1 Year of Service  
 FF/P Andrew Isenberg                    1 Year of Service

**Alarms for August 2011**

Total – 166 alarms, prior year had 159.

### **Investments**

Three CDs came to maturity and were redeemed. Those funds will be reinvested as the Board directed at the last board meeting (08/24/11).

### **Attachments**

- Thank you for donation from WHS Boosters.
- Engineer Chris Lucas was acknowledged for his participation in the NLTFD Engineer Exam. Chief Sharit noted that this experience with other fire agencies is extremely valuable and Engineer Lucas did a great job.
- Fires – 8; 2 structures, 2 wildland and 4 misc. fires.
- Question if all probationary employees passed their probation; two did, the third was extended 6 months.

Chairman Dorton noted the amounts of hazmat items that were collected. Chief Novak reminded everyone that these are dangerous materials and it is important to have them disposed of properly. He noted Engineer Brandon Spry oversees that project and does a great job.

Chairman Dorton also acknowledged the resident letter from 285 Chukar Road, on the outstanding job the Zephyr Crew did clearing his property.

Trustee Clason inquired as to how many defensible space inspections have been completed. Chief Novak said we do not currently have that information, however, the engine companies completed over 500 curbside inspections that were followed up with letters. He noted the plan was to complete that same number each fire season. Several Trustees had received letters and were impressed with the detail.

Chairman Dorton asked Captain Strickley if he was present at the Firehouse Dinner on 9/15/11, which he was and served as Chef with Engineer Zabel. It was purchased at the Rotary event, everyone enjoyed the evening and the food was exceptional.

Forester Pickett wanted to acknowledge engine companies on the curbside inspections and how detailed the reports were. He has been out to 10 - 15 inspections which were stimulated by the curbside inspections/letters and he has found them to be very accurate. The engine companies performed the project quickly, at a very high quality level and in great detail.

**14. Possible Action Item:     *Public Comment.***

There was no comment.

**15. Discussion:                 *Confirm next regular meeting on Wednesday,  
October 26 @ 4:00 pm, possible agenda items.***

Trustee Clason made a motion to move the next meeting up to **October 19 at 4:00 pm** with possible action on:

- Appoint the Fire Chief
- Approve the Fire Chief Contract

Trustee Seibel seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried 5-0.

**13. Action Item:      *Adjourn.***

A motion was made by Trustee Seibel to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Clason seconded the motion. No discussion, motion carried 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:44 pm.

This meeting was recorded on audio tape.

**Kate Warner**  
**Administrative Assistant**  
**Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District**