

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PREVENTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
February 22, 2017

Those Present:

Chairman Bill Kirschner
Vice Chairperson Ann Grant
Trustee Greg Felton
Trustee Kevin Kjer
Trustee Larry Schussel
Fire Chief Scott Baker
Legal Counsel Devon Reese (via phone)
Battalion Chief Ralph Jones
Fire Marshal Eric Guevin
Fire Inspector Todd Stroup

Office Manager Kate Warner
Accounting Specialist Carrie Nolting
Administrative Assistant Erin Allison
Crew Supervisor Keegan Schafer
Guest Bob Cook

1. Call to Order.

Meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

Pledge of allegiance was led by Trustee Kjer.

3. Roll Call.

Chairman Kirchner, Vice Chairperson Grant, Trustee Felton, Trustee Kjer, and Trustee Schussel were present. A quorum was present.

4. Approval of the Agenda.

Trustee Felton motioned to approve the agenda with the redaction of Item 9. Trustee Kjer seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

5. Public Comment.

None.

6. Approval of the Consent Calendar.

Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes 01/25/17
- b. Monthly Expenditures

- c. Financials – 07/30/16, 08/31/16, 09/30/16

Trustee Felton motioned to approve Consent Calendar Items b and c as presented, and move Item a forward for changes. Trustee Schussel seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

7. For Possible Action: Consent items moved forward.

Vice Chairperson Grant commented that on page 5 of the minutes, under Item 11, in the last sentence of the first paragraph, the first “are” should be removed. On page 8, in the second sentence of the next to last paragraph, the word “a” should be removed.

Vice Chairperson Grant motioned to approve Item a as corrected. Trustee Schussel seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

8. Report Item: Update on the Board Goals & Objectives for FY 2017-2018.

Vice Chairperson Ann Grant
Trustee Greg Felton

Vice Chairperson Grant explained that she and Trustee Felton met with Chief Baker and they will be refining the list of goals and objectives. They will be reviewed in the March board meeting.

Trustee Felton explained that they are working on 4 categories:

1. Government engagement – our organization is tied into other governmental organizations, and this will include how we interact and work with these organizations (i.e. Board of County Commissioners, County Manager, federal grants, etc.);
2. Community outreach and education – our organization is tied to the community, and we want to make sure they know what we do and what resources are available to them;
3. Water supply and prevention – this will include the district’s plan to address insufficient fire flow, our ISO rating, and redevelopment; and
4. Strategic planning – this will include changes to the mission statement, standards of coverage, property planning, and IT changes.

The goals will be quantitative with measurable outcomes.

Chairman Kirschner volunteered to be the first to meet with Chief Baker and the County Commissioners.

Trustee Schussel asked if these meetings would be during the monthly BOCC meeting or at separate times.

Chief Baker responded that he would like to introduce all of the trustees to the county commissioners. The goal is to have either a TDFPD staff member or trustee at the BOCC

meetings, and to have everyone establish a close working relationship with our representative, Nancy McDermid.

- 9. For Discussion and Possible Action: Investment Policy for the Post-Retirement Trust.**
Fire Chief Scott Baker

This item was withdrawn at the start of the meeting for insufficient description of the item on the agenda.

- 10. Presentation: Fuels Management – 2016 fire season review and 2017 planning and projections.**
Crew Supervisor Keegan Schafer

Crew Supervisor Schafer explained that his presentation will cover the accomplishments of the 2016 fuels season.

The main purpose of fuels management is to stop the catastrophic result of wildfire on homes. To do this, we need to look at where we can break the chain as a district. The three factors that majorly affect wildfire are fuels, weather, and topography. The only thing we can control is fuels.

Schafer said he has seen a fairly significant change in the weather over the past few years. Historically, we would have three or four red flag warnings in a season, including the day of the Angora Fire. Now, we are experiencing more severe weather patterns, resulting in fifteen to twenty red flag warnings during a season.

When the Zephyr Crew is assigned to a large fire, it is usually a wildland fire. The chain needs to be broken when the fire gets into urban areas and begins to threaten structures to avoid simultaneous home ignitions. The goal of fuels management is to minimize the ability for intensive fire to move into and through the urban environment.

The National Cohesive Strategy is the multi-stakeholders approach to fuels management and wildfire response. At the Zephyr Crew level, they execute the Local Strategy, which breaks down the Federal Strategy and applies it directly to the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Local Strategy was developed by the Tahoe Fire and Fuels team, and includes mitigation strategies, fire reduction strategies, and community involvement to help prevent wildfire.

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan has three goals: restore and maintain fire-resilient landscapes, create fire adapted communities, and provide effective and efficient wildfire response. As a district, we are doing all of these things right now, which we hope will help protect homes in our district from ignition.

The Wildland Urban Interface includes a defense zone and the threat zone. The defense zone is where life safety and property protection are most important. We assess this zone to look at the most densely populated areas that could benefit the most from fuels management work, which largely consists of the US Forest Service lots that are close to the homes in these areas.

The Zephyr Crew offers several services and tools during their season. This year was the third annual Community Work Day program, with 88 homeowners requesting services. In the past, the crew only worked for one day of the weekend in each neighborhood, but because of the high request volume last season, they spent a full weekend in each neighborhood.

The Curbside Defensible Space Inspection program started in 2011, and we completed all 2,500 properties in the district by 2015. We will repeat the 4 year cycle with this program to continue to inspect all properties in the district. This year, crews completed 631 initial inspections, 367 second inspections based on homeowner requests, and 114 third inspections based on homeowner requests. Citations were issued to eight of these properties, with only two sent to court.

Fire Marshal Guevin explained that one of the citations was taken care of in court because the resident requested more time to complete the required work. The other person who was cited did not show up either time, so the judge issued a subpoena for his arrest, and he will be extradited if he comes in contact with law enforcement for any reason. This is due to contempt of court, not because of the fire district's citation.

Chairman Kirschner commented that the enforcement efforts put some teeth into our regulations.

Schafer explained that the district had a 99% compliance rate for the properties that were inspected this year. There are a lot of residents that call into the district of their own accord to get our assistance with defensible space and fuels management.

This year's Compost your Combustibles program resulted in the removal of 500 tons of biomass from the district. This program runs from Memorial Day to the Fourth of July at the Heavenly Boulder parking lot. This program has been one of the most applauded programs that we have held so far.

Chairman Kirschner asked what happens to the biomass when it is removed.

Schafer responded that the South Tahoe Refuse (STR) gets credit for any biomass that they ship out to companies that put it to use, some of it gets stuffed into waddles to secure the banks at Heavenly, and some of it is composted in the valley.

Trustee Felton asked why the program lasts for only a brief window of time (May-July).

Schafer responded that Vail Resorts set the timeline based on their needs to use their parking lot, as well as the extra work that it creates for the STR. The STR would rather see the credits

come directing from their facility rather than hauling it off from an off-site location. It is the time frame that we agreed upon with our partners.

The Zephyr Crew also completed 109 acres of hand thinning during the 2016 season. There has been a fluctuation in the number of acres through the years because when the program started, the crew was doing a lot of mechanical thinning that they aren't doing anymore. Hand thinning was completed in Glenbrook, Upper Haines Canyon, Paiute Dr, US Forest Service urban lots, Tahoe Village, and a few various locations. The US Forest Service lots are hard acres that slowed work down a little bit, but it was well worth it because these lots are in between houses and are located in places where wildland fires can start fairly easily if not properly maintained.

This is the ten year anniversary of the Zephyr Crew, which is something to be very proud of.

The Zephyr Crew also completed a significant amount of work for private owners with large parcels of land, specifically for two parcels out of the basin on the valley side of Kingsbury. While this isn't in our district, a fire threat outside the basin could carry over and cause fire danger for us in the Basin, so it is important to address.

The crew received 113 chipping requests during the 2016 season, 44 of which were for Community Work Days. They are utilizing a tracked chipper, which is a new tool that is great for projects on which they can't conduct prescribed burning operations.

Pile burning was completed at Shakespeare Rock, Upper Haines Canyon, Granite Crest, US Forest Service land in Cave Rock, Chimney Rock, and Kingsbury, and some residential properties. A total of 195 acres of burning has been completed so far, and the crew will be doing more when conditions permit. The burn crew of thirteen crew members will be rehired, and Schafer hopes to complete another 100 acres of burning.

Chairman Kirschner asked about the crew's work schedule.

Schafer responded that the full crew will start in May, but the thirteen-person burn crew works year round when the weather permits.

Trustee Felton asked why paper is put in piles that they are burning.

Schafer responded that they don't commonly do it, but in high elevation projects when the fuels are saturated, they use paper to keep something dry in the pile to get it to burn.

One of the signature projects that the crew completed this year was a large private parcel on the valley side of Kingsbury. They built piles of manzanita in a halo around the house and burned them on a day that precipitation was coming in. The crew spent about a month cutting the manzanita and creating piles, and spent only a few hours burning.

Trustee Schussel asked how soon the crew would have to go back and burn the same parcel.

Schafer responded that fire will stunt the growth, but it is not a definitive fix. The fuels will grow back a lot slower than if they were just cut, and it will be at least a decade before they would have to go back.

Training

Thanks to Bob Cook, the 2016 Zephyr Crew was able to have access to Douglas County Sewer's 1000 acre property in the valley for initial training. They tied in with NDF, and the crew was given an extra 24 hours of training of which they used every second. They were woken up after an hour of sleep and ran drills all night, working on all different kinds of skills and aspects of being on a wildland fire crew.

Notable Assignments

Crew Foreman Fogarty took the crew to Wyoming, which was a first for the crew. The crew helped with initial attack of the Cascade Fire on Emerald Point. They also went to Alabama with North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District's Slide Mountain crew, which was a very good experience for the crew because they got to see a very different type of firefighting and different fuel types.

Chairman Kirschner complimented Schafer and the crew on a great job well done.

Vice Chairperson Grant commented that until the crew started working with the Forest Service, there were burn piles all over the district that people complained about, and she never hears complaints anymore.

Schafer responded that working with the Forest Service is good because they have limited personnel and a substantial amount of acreage to care for, so it is a great way to utilize our crew and be able to treat our district to a high standard of fuels reduction.

Vice Chairperson Grant complimented the crew on the Community Work Day that they completed in Skyland. They have a 95 year old resident with a very large backyard, and the crew created a second entry and cleaned up the entire lot. She is also hard of hearing, and Fire Inspector Stroup has been in touch with her about the vibro-tactile fire alarms.

11. Report Item: Review of Fire District Activities. Fire Chief Scott Baker

Chief Baker recognized Office Manager Warner for 7 years of service and Crew Foreman Fogarty for 3 years of service.

Mechanic Gemmet is back from leave, and he was very helpful advising our crews over the phone while he was out. The crews did a great job maintaining the vehicles while he was gone as well.

Douglas County has kept in close contact regarding Emergency Operating Center activations.

Most counties were activated for a “flood event”, but Douglas County activated us for the “weather event.” Our efforts have gone into meeting the threshold that will allow us to be reimbursed for damages, even though we won’t know full damages until spring when the snow melts. The Zephyr Crew went to Cold Springs to help with sandbagging, and NDF helped with clearing hydrants in our district during the weather events.

Recruit Bean has been doing very well in the Regional Fire Academy. He is head of the class academically, and is very close to the top on his firefighter skills as well, even though he doesn’t have a lot of previous fire experience. Engineer Reddig has been doing a great job as Recruit Training Officer as well. Crew Supervisor Schafer and Crew Foreman Fogarty have been teaching wildland for the Academy, and Fire Inspector Stroup has been teaching fire prevention.

Carson City Fire Department’s Fire Chief has retired, leaving them with a big gap. We have been involved in Fire Chief, Captain, and Driver Operator recruitment and testing.

There was an AED save at Heavenly this month. Ski patrol did a great job responding quickly and getting the patient back, and he was conscious by the time we arrived.

All Chief Officers had combined training with South Lake Tahoe Fire and Rescue this month, which was very beneficial to all. We are planning to do the same type of training with North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District and East Fork Fire Protection District.

The Engineer Academy is currently in process. Assistant Chief Antti, the Battalion Chiefs, Captains, and Engineers have been working on planning and training to help create a succession plan. The Engineer test will be in May.

Captain Isenberg and Engineer Apple attended the Rio Hondo Truck Academy in California, and will now be our cadre instructors for the truck. The district will move into more truck operations in the future once training has been completed.

During the recent storms, we have had damage to personal vehicles and stations. The vehicles were damaged from snow shed off the roofs, and the district is looking into whether the employees’ private insurance or the district’s insurance should cover the damage, since it wasn’t any fault of their own. We are also working on repairs at stations 24 and 25.

The Post-Retirement Trust Board met this month. During the recent 2015 audit, we were advised that we need to codify the investment practices that the fire boards follow for the PRT. The fire board will be asked to approve the investment policy that was approved by the PRT Board at next month’s meeting.

The Fire Flow Initiative is moving forward. We have set our limits of what we need to start the program, and have people who want to participate. We are attempting to put the program in

motion for the good of the district, and have a concrete business plan with an agreement in place. Currently, the district is working on the logistics of taking donations. If we don't reach the monetary goal that we need to launch the program, the money will be given back to the donors and they will have to find other means of adequate fire flow.

Chief Baker has been working with Wayne Omel from Edward Jones, and \$200,000 was invested this week. Interest rates are going up, so we don't want to get too far out on CDs, and will be monitoring the rates before making the next investment.

The Wildfire Protection Plan with NDF for \$60,000 is in the process of being renewed. There are no changes except wording that needed to be fixed. This plan deals with catastrophe planning.

Chief Baker met with an actuary on the funding for the Post-Retirement Trust, and went through the 2015 documents. Looking at what we have already and at the forecast, we are on par, and Chief Baker and the actuary are confident in this fiscal year's \$1 million contribution. Next fiscal year, we will wait for valuation in January 2018 that will be based on the new GASB 75. We are getting close to the \$11 million goal and will continue to keep a close eye on how much money is invested. We will have new actuarial numbers in January 2018.

Trustee Felton asked if by Chief Baker saying he is confident in our \$1 million contribution, he means he is confident the Trust won't be overfunded.

Chief Baker responded that that is correct. We are in the ballpark of 70% funded. We are doing better than the 8% return that we based the forecast off of, so we need to monitor our investments closely.

12. Report Item: Review of Fire District Division Reports.
Battalion Chief Ralph Jones
Office Manager Kate Warner

Jones

As a new BC, Jones' staff assignment is departmental training. C-shift has been consistently out training and working hard, which is a tribute to the Captains, who have done a very good job getting their crews trained. Captain Green does a great job with training his crews.

When Chief Baker became the Assistant Chief, he started a monthly training topic sheet that gets put up around stations as an informational sheet on different types of training. Chief Jones thanked Captain Brady for this month's training sheet, which addressed electrical issues. This was very appropriate for this month because we have had a lot of power lines down and calls dealing with electrical problems.

Captain Isenberg has been running HazMat for the last four years and has done a great job. As part of our succession plan, Firefighter/Paramedic Norwood will be taking over for him in the near future.

Captain Brady will be taking over the rope rescue program and will be bringing in other crew members for succession planning. This program includes low angle, high angle, and quickline rope response.

Captain Brady is also building on our vehicle extrication program using IT technology for more enhanced vehicle recognition technology. This will allow crews to study the specifics of certain cars and what crews need to look out for in different vehicles.

Engineer Johnson will continue leading the water rescue program, which will be starting up again in the summer. He will be attempting to intertwine water rescue training with HazMat training for incidents like the Tahoe Queen fire.

Engineer Darr taught sessions one and two of the Engineer Academy, which reviews everything that an engineer does through hands on training. The Academy is broken into eight sessions. Crews have already completed sessions one and two. Engineer Fine will instruct sessions three and four, Engineer Apple will instruct sessions five and six, and Engineer Fine will instruct sessions seven and eight.

This Academy is being completed while crews are on duty, as opposed to the two-week course schedule that we used in the past. Captain Cranch helped transfer the plans for the two-week class into an on-shift Academy, which took about two and a half months to complete. Engineer Prather wrote the engineer's manual while he was becoming an engineer himself, which has become extremely helpful and is now being used as a guide for the Academy.

The department calendar is demanding, so the BC's have been trying to transition into Target Solutions to help time management for Captains and to allow for more efficient and timely training.

A future training needs assessment was sent out to all line personnel which will be due back March 1. The goal is to find out what classes the firefighters need to enhance their career and how the department can help them get those. The crews are excited about where the department is going with training.

Based on the interest list for crew members to lead training that was completed earlier this year, Chief Jones has created a spreadsheet and is assigning employees to instruct in their areas of interest. This is to put training back in the control of the Captains and to use instructors that are excited and interested in what they are doing (succession plan).

Chairman Kirschner asked if anyone in bomb disposal would be coming up in the future.

Chief Jones responded that DCSO's Leeland Love recently completed HazMat technician certification and training in Alabama. Engineer Darr leaves in April for the training in Alabama, and Engineer Johnson leaves for it in May.

Chief Baker explained that we can't bring in extra people unless current technicians are removed from the squad.

Vice Chairperson Grant asked if employees can get the training and wait for the spot.

Chief Baker responded that no, the FBI puts on the training for technicians only.

Chief Jones responded that the FBI determines how many technicians each area gets based on call volume and needs, which is determined through federal reporting.

Chief Jones and Chief Antti will be transitioning out of the squad in the future, and Engineers Darr and Johnson will be coming on to take their places.

Warner

Administrative Assistant Allison has been working on updating the TDFPD website by systematically going through all the tabs and pages and making any necessary changes. Beginning in 2017, approved BOT resolutions will be posted.

The employment section has been updated with the job posting for the Zephyr Crew positions that are open, and we have registered 502 hits on that item. Administrative Assistant Allison has been processing all incoming applications.

The district staff photos have been updated, including Vice Chairperson Grant. The staff photos are listed alphabetically to make it easier to search through this section. The Partner Agencies section has been updated to include CALStar and will include REMSA in the near future. The Community Service Agencies page has information on CERT, and more information will be added in the near future.

The Charity Support page has been updated to include all charities that the district supports, including Northern Nevada Children's Cancer Foundation, Christmas Cheer, George Whittell High School Boosters Club, Tahoe-Douglas Rotary, Sorpotimist International, and Zephyr Cove Elementary School Parent's Club.

Administrative Assistant Allison has also been putting teasers on Facebook for TDFPD donations of cornhole games and fire hydrants for upcoming events, and following up with flyers to the events to get the community interested in attending these fundraising events.

The district has made changes to the donations/gifts. We used to send flowers to employees when they had babies. Flowers have been replaced with new baby sweatshirts with a TDFPD patch that can be worn by the baby, that promote the fire district, and that save the district

money. Customized cornhole games and the Round Hill GID historical fire hydrants will replace the firehouse birthday parties as donations.

On the calendar in the next month:

Mar 3 – Green Eggs and Ham with the Tahoe-Douglas Rotary at the elementary school – crews will help cook eggs or read Dr. Seuss books to one of the classes. If any of the trustees would like to attend, station 24 will start cooking at 7:00 am and take the eggs to the school at 9:00 am.

Mar 17 – Applications close for 2017 Zephyr Crew recruitment, Regional Fire Academy graduation in Carson City, Tahoe-Douglas Rotary fundraiser.

Mar 22 – Blood drive at GWHS – 8:30 am to 2:30 pm – classes can win a pizza party if students bring in people to donate.

Mar 31 – Tahoe Chamber Business Expo – we will have a booth.

Apr – the Bomb Squad Drug Store Project and Easter egg hunt at Kahle. The Union donates \$500 to the Easter egg hunt, and will be working to get banners up ahead of time with the TDFPD logo included.

For Office Manager Warner's seven year anniversary with TDFPD, she came up with some statistics to share with the Board. In the past seven years, she and/or the fire district has:

Held two titles – Administrative Assistant and Office Manager;

Worked under three Fire Chiefs and six Assistant Chiefs;

Processed out 22 retirees and held retirement ceremonies for them;

Hired, trained, and oriented 31 new employees;

Worked with seven Board chairmen/women;

Coordinated five pancake breakfasts;

Hosted 25 community blood drives, producing 1,145 units of blood;

Hosted four retiree BBQs;

Completed two POOL/PACT audits – improved our filing system and created a file disposal schedule;

Completed twelve other audits – two NV PERS, six FY audits, and four Post-Retirement Trust audits;

Hired, trained, oriented 149 Zephyr Crew members, with eleven of those members moving to full time careers in fire service – seven with Tahoe Douglas and four with other agencies;

Launched a new website, Facebook and Twitter accounts, and have Instagram in the works;

Hosted 19 firehouse birthday parties;

Participated in eight fire academy graduations;

Rolled over 22 retirees from our fire district insurance to Medicare; and

Added one new facility – Station 22.

13. Discussion:

Confirm next meeting, with a proposed date of Wednesday March 22, 2017 with a start time of 2:30 p.m. and possible agenda items.

Meeting confirmed for Wednesday, March 22nd, 2017 with a start time of 2:30 p.m. in the Station 23 classroom.

Possible agenda items are the Board Goals and Objectives and the Post-Retirement Trust Investment Policy.

Adjourn.

Trustee Grant motioned to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Kjer seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

Closed Session: Not needed at this meeting.

**Erin Allison
Board Secretary
Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District**

APPROVED