

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

TUESDAY

2:00 P.M.

SEPTEMBER 10, 2002

PRESENT:

Pete Sferrazza, Chairman
Joanne Bond, Vice Chairman
Jim Galloway, Commissioner
Jim Shaw, Commissioner
Ted Short, Commissioner

Amy Harvey, County Clerk
Katy Singlaub, County Manager
Madelyn Shipman, Legal Counsel
Robert Ruffridge, Regional Manager

The Board met in regular session in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada, and conducted the following business:

02-04SF AGENDA

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, on motion by Commissioner Bond, seconded by Commissioner Short, which motion duly carried, Chairman Sferrazza ordered that the agenda for the September 10, 2002 meeting be approved.

MINUTES

On motion by Commissioner Bond, seconded by Commissioner Short, which motion duly carried, Chairman Sferrazza ordered that the minutes of the regular meeting of May 20, 2002 be approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sam Dehne, Reno resident, said that government must be monitored.

02-05SF REPORT – DISTRICT ACTIVITY

Robert Ruffridge, Regional Manager, said the last 60 days have been very quiet; and there has not been a significant wildland fire in the District since the Gondola fire in South Lake Tahoe.

He said the District is working on bids for the new brush trucks that were approved in the current budget.

Mr. Ruffridge stated that career firefighters from all of the District's engine companies have been through live fire drills at the training center, and that has been very beneficial. He further stated that volunteer firefighters are starting to train at the training center.

Mr. Ruffridge said the District has grants for fuel management and fuel reduction that are available to the public and government agencies, and they have received good responses from homeowners associations, the State Parks Department, Washoe County Parks Department, and other local governments for these grants.

02-06SF REPORT – FUEL REDUCTION ALTERNATIVES

Robert Ruffridge, Regional Manager, handed out two pamphlets which were placed on file with the Clerk. These pamphlets explain fuel reduction alternatives and are available to the public. He said seasonal firefighters have been attempting to go door to door, especially in the urban interface area, and deliver these pamphlets as well as offer to perform a clearance inspection for the homeowner. He stated the pamphlets encourage homeowners to contact their local fire department before doing anything in terms of fuels management because there are a number of different rules depending on where you live. He further stated some homeowners associations have CC&R's that dictate terms of fuel clearance. Mr. Ruffridge said the U. S. Forest Service is going to clear significant overgrowth at the Whites Creek and Thomas Creek trailheads, the St. James Village area, Galena Park, Davis Creek, and on private lands in West Washoe Valley. He further said the Division is hoping to haul fuels or provide chippers for the public as opposed to burning fuels on site.

COMMISSIONERS'/MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Commissioner Galloway said it is not the intention of the District to unreasonably increase fire risk to property owners, and there is inherent fire risk for residents in forested areas. He stated he has received many complaints concerning the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's (TRPA) scenic regulations not allowing homeowners to carry out the best practices for fire prevention as prescribed by Fire Departments. He further stated these complaints triggered a letter from six Tahoe Basin Fire Chiefs expressing concern that the scenic regulations would exacerbate the fire problem. Commissioner Galloway said the main question now is which jurisdiction has precedence when there is a conflict between TRPA and State Law. He urged TRPA to sign a reasonable agreement with the Fire Departments that would not endanger the lives, safety, property, and homes of people living in their jurisdiction. He said that it would be a case of government unreasonably crossing the line if TRPA is not willing to compromise.

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There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned.

PETER J. SFERRAZZA, Chairman
Sierra Forest Fire Protection District

ATTEST:

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

*Minutes Prepared By
Melissa M. Ayrault, Deputy County Clerk*