

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

TUESDAY

2:00 P.M.

AUGUST 10, 2004

PRESENT:

Jim Shaw, Chairman
Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairman
Jim Galloway, Commissioner
David Humke, Commissioner
Pete Sferrazza, Commissioner

Nancy Parent, Chief Deputy Clerk
Katy Singlaub, County Manager
Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel
Tim Rochelle, Regional Forester

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:

04-10SF AGENDA

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, on motion by Commissioner Humke, seconded by Commissioner Weber, which motion duly carried, Chairman Shaw ordered that the agenda for the August 10, 2004 meeting be approved.

04-11SF MINUTES

Chairman Shaw requested that Tim Rochelle, Regional Forester, provide copies of all items for the Board members, and Chief Rochelle explained his process of getting materials to the Board. Commissioners Galloway and Weber asked for the staff reports to be provided earlier for their preparation for the meetings.

On motion by Commissioner Galloway, seconded by Commissioner Humke, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Sferrazza abstaining, Chairman Shaw ordered that the minutes of the March 9, 2004 meeting be approved.

04-12SF REPORT OF DISTRICT ACTIVITY

Tim Rochelle, Regional Forester, presented the Report of District Activity, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He highlighted the Verdi Complex Fire and the Waterfall Fire. He reported there had been no accidents or injuries of the career staff, seasonals, and volunteers.

04-13SF **ISSUANCE OF BURNING PERMITS**

Tim Rochelle, Regional Forester, reviewed the statistics on burn permits for 2004, which were placed on file with the Clerk.

In response to Commissioner Galloway, Chief Rochelle said it is better to allow controlled burning than to ask homeowners to dispose of the materials in another manner. He confirmed the overall safety impact is improved.

Commissioner Humke stated he was not persuaded and that air quality needs to be addressed. He confirmed he would research State statute and County ordinance to appeal burning because there is no need to allow for it. He added that anything could be hauled away to the landfill.

Chairman Shaw inquired if there are different categories for burn permits, and if the public has to disclose what they would be burning. Chief Rochelle explained that all sites are inspected prior to issuing a burn permit, and the State Forester dictates the conditions.

Commissioner Sferrazza said he would support a burn ban, especially in the summer months. County Manager Katy Singlaub explained that burning is not allowed in the summer months anywhere within Washoe County's jurisdiction. She remarked that she would welcome many of the fire agencies to present to the Commissioners how important the role of fuels reduction through controlled burns plays in forest fire and wildland fire management.

Commissioner Humke inquired about the fee for a burn permit, and Chief Rochelle responded that there was no fee. Commissioner Humke said there should be a \$500 fee. Ms. Singlaub explained that the County is trying to encourage people to control the slash on their properties with the help of the Forest Fire Protection Districts. Chief Rochelle confirmed that there are air quality regulations in Washoe County, as well as statewide regulations. He stated there are certain conditions in which it is good to burn to gain complete combustion of the fuels.

Commissioner Galloway said there is a burn ban on private property and a burn ban that impacts public agencies. (See minute correction on 12/14/04.) He expressed that he would be concerned if the other Board members did not trust their own professional firefighters to burn materials. He requested, if that discussion were to return to the Board, he would like to see every fire agency in the County represented. He added, if the discussion were to focus on private property, he would like to see real life comparisons of what it would cost someone to haul fuels off their property under an abatement order. He noted it would not benefit the County if the costs were so excessive that property owners did not comply.

Gary Schmidt, Washoe County resident, explained that another alternative to hauling or burning would be to rent a goat, as grazing is a way to keep grasses under

control on properties. He confirmed there could be an air quality problem if too many goats ate too much grass.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sam Dehne, Reno resident, declared firefighters are the real heroes.

Al Hesson, area resident, commented about the military service of George W. Bush and John Kerry. He said actions on the battlefield show that President Bush fails and Mr. Kerry passes.

Gary Schmidt, Washoe County resident, directed his comments to County Manager Katy Singlaub, concerning presentations in the Commission Chambers. He stated there should be a system set up for the public to be able to view maps and large displays.

* * * * *

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

JAMES M. SHAW, Chairman
Sierra Forest Fire Protection District

ATTEST:

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

*Minutes Prepared by
Lori Rowe, Deputy County Clerk*