

**BOARD OF FIRE DIRECTORS, SIERRA FIRE
PROTECTION DISTRICT**

TUESDAY

4:00 P.M.

FEBRUARY 12, 2008

PRESENT:

Bob Larkin, Chairman
Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairman
Jim Galloway, Director
David Humke, Director
Kitty Jung, Director

Amy Harvey, County Clerk
Katy Singlaub, County Manager
Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel
Michael Greene, Fire Chief

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:

08-00SF DISCUSSION ON AGENDA

Michael Greene, Fire Chief, requested Agenda Item 3, discussion and possible action to execute a new jointly developed agreement with the 501-C Volunteer Fire Departments be pulled and brought back during a future meeting.

On motion by Director Galloway, seconded by Director Weber, which motion duly carried, Chairman Larkin ordered that Agenda Item 3 be pulled.

08-01SF AGENDA ITEM 2

Agenda Subject: “Chief Report regarding fuels management, fire prevention, Community newsletter and volunteer program.”

Michael Greene, Fire Chief, said the District was fine-tuning the Volunteer Agreement. He said it had been collaborative and positive and all volunteer programs had participated. He commented monthly meetings were held and explained the agreements needed to be individualized to the specific agencies. Chief Greene felt this would be a positive step forward for the volunteer program.

Chief Greene explained the community newsletter promoted the Fuels Management Inspection Program. He said the intent of the program was to inspect properties in the District, with a primary and, if needed, follow-up inspection. He explained if after the follow-up inspection residents were still non-compliant, those properties would be forwarded to the Board for action.

Director Galloway asked if the District had enough authority to enforce noncompliance. Chief Greene replied as a 473 District the inspection could be completed and the noncompliant property owners brought to the attention of the Board for additional action, to include clean-up at County expense, then reimbursement from the property owner. Director Galloway asked what would be used as a guideline. Chief Greene indicated a 30 foot clearance would be used as a guideline.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

There was no action taken on this item.

08-02SF AGENDA ITEM 4

Agenda Subject: “Discussion and possible action to clarify process to ensure openness, efficiency and successful conclusion of SFPD strategic planning process regarding consideration of alternatives for the future status and possible re-organization of the Sierra Fire Protection District.”

Chief Greene explained previously he addressed the Board with a situational analysis, and the Board then provided direction based on the parameters recommended in the staff report; however, a requirement was complying with the Open Meeting Law. He said because the District was not a public body, he required additional clarification over the process to be used. He remarked to date the District had appeared before the Washoe Valley Citizen Advisory Board (CAB), the Verdi CAB, and homeowners groups to provide an overview of current fiscal and operational issues. Chief Greene explained input would be gathered from the community first, secondly staff would be meet with the affected parties to find solutions and finally those inputs would be defined to develop a matrix of alternatives.

In response to Chairman Larkin, Chief Greene replied there was confusion over the Open Meeting Law requirement because the District was not a public body; however, he wanted the process to be open and inclusive.

Director Humke hoped the process would be open and publicized, but perhaps a wrong term was chosen. He said this was an executive branch staff operation interfaced with citizens.

Chairman Larkin said the District would be relieved of complying with NRS 241.100. He did not think the intent of the Board of Directors was to include entities outside of Washoe County. Chief Greene said the State of Nevada would be involved in a feasibility agreement. He explained staff would speak to community groups to establish challenges and problems, and receive input on options along with the viability of those options, then return back to the neighborhood groups for additional comments before returning to the Board with a final report. Chairman Larkin remarked the Chief reported directly to the Board of Directors and no other bodies, which was unique; however, he

suggested that the Manager's Office and the District arrive at an interlocal agreement to help navigate the process. Chief Greene replied the Manager's Office had been a great asset in providing County resources; however, he understood the need to formalize that agreement.

Director Galloway said this item was drafted to discuss the process and not address the subject. He requested on future agendas a separate item be added for Board member comments to discuss the issues.

In response to Chairman Larkin, Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel, clarified the process was being discussed. She said if the Board felt there needed to be further discussion on the substance of the issue it would be wise to reschedule the item. Ms. Foster explained the Nevada Supreme Court struck down the nexus defense, which did not survive in Open Meeting Law challenges. Director Galloway asked if he could respond under the public comment item. Chairman Larkin replied that would be appropriate.

Director Weber reported she had the opportunity to hear the entire presentation when given to the Verdi CAB. She was concerned that the presentation had a sense of urgency, and she hoped if the Chief had that sense of urgency, the Board did as well.

Director Jung said this was clarifying a process. She asked now that citizen input had been collected and the proposed matrix of solutions created, how it was ensured the process would move forward, outside of the neighborhood meetings, and join with the County Manager in strategizing and creating an on-going process. Chief Greene replied the community input did not develop the matrix, but specifically brought awareness of the problem. He said he was asking for additional ideas from the community in resolving the problem so the community message would be consolidated into the staff work that developed the matrix.

Director Jung commented she was in support of public safety as well as the existing jobs of the firefighters in the District. She requested that the Managers work toward the preservation and enhancement of that functionality. Chief Greene replied the District had been given a set of parameters and explained those could work at the operational level. He clarified he was requesting direction to review the options, address the government partners and receive direction at the operational level.

Chairman Larkin said the recommendation on the staff report was to continue meeting with the advisory boards and CAB's to receive input and then develop a matrix of alternatives before returning to the affected parties to discuss the options. Chief Greene stated that was correct. He indicated, depending on the ability of the fire partners to work together to identify those options, the gathering of public input would be completed soon. He said the return visits to the CAB's and other groups would take an additional month and then return to the Board with a solution in June.

In response to the call for public comment, Bob Parker stated this was an organizational issue that needed to be fixed, but was fixable, and urged the Board to move forward. Kathleen Bregand said she was concerned about Fire Department's response times in the unincorporated areas. She discussed paramedic coverage and stated fully trained paramedics did not ride on every fire engine. Ms. Bregand presented a letter, which was placed on file with the Clerk. Donna Perez spoke on the call for service in the area and urged the Board to develop a plan that would ensure the future success of the District and allow the taxpayers a high level of confidence regarding fire and medical emergency protection. Steven Perez said the problem was that the Sierra Fire Protection District was not being included equally into the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection network. He said if that were the case response times would be faster and boundary lines would be erased. Kim Toulouse spoke on paramedic services. He said the residents of Verdi were paying for a service that was not being received and supplied the background to that statement. Gary Schmidt said the main problem of fire protection in the Truckee Meadows was due to political dysfunction.

On motion by Director Humke, seconded by Director Jung, which motion duly carried, Chairman Larkin ordered that the Sierra Fire Protection District Chief implement the recommendations outlined in the staff report and return to the Board. It was further ordered that the Chief provide periodic updates.

08-03SF AGENDA ITEM 5

Agenda Subject: "Approve and execute a twelve (12) month Lease Agreement between Marc and Kelley Radow, (Lessor) and Washoe County of behalf of the Sierra Fire Protection District (Lessee) to expand and extend the term of occupancy for the District Administrative Offices commencing March 1, 2008 and terminating on February 28, 2009 and for other such terms and conditions as provided therein. Annual Lease and related expenses \$41,400; Funds are available in cost center 282291-710600.

Director Galloway said it had been discussed to expand the station on the Mt. Rose Highway and asked if the lease agreement was an interim step. Chief Michael Greene explained it was an interim step and he would meet with the Washoe County Sheriff's Office to review preliminary plans in sharing the space.

On motion by Director Humke, seconded by Director Jung, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5 be approved and executed.

08-04SF AGENDA ITEM 6

Agenda Subject: "Public Comment and discussion thereon, The Sierra Fire Protection District Board of Directors welcomes courteous and respectful public comment and input. Due to the amount of business the District Board conducts, public comment is limited to two minutes per person."

Director Galloway commented the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA) provided medical response and needed to be in the equation. He stressed whatever the solution, he commended the efforts the District made to improve compliance with defensible space; however, he was concerned that if an option did not allow that to continue, he would request that be flagged as part of the matrix.

Director Jung said there was a large financial service for medical emergencies and noted REMSA charged for said services, but the fire department was a collective and subsidized via tax dollars.

Gary Schmidt spoke on the Andrew Lane fire that occurred in 2004.

* * * * *

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

ROBERT M. LARKIN, Chairman
Sierra Fire Protection District

ATTEST:

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

*Minutes prepared by:
Stacy Gonzales, Deputy Clerk*