

**TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

August 15, 2011

Special Session

Those Present:

Trustee RJ Clason
Chairperson Brad Dorton
Trustee Ann Grant
Trustee Kevin Kjer
Trustee Steve Siebel
Fire Chief Guy LeFever
Assistant Fire Chief Van Ogami
Fire Marshal Mark Novak
Battalion Chief Dave Hekhuis
Battalion Chief Ben Sharit
Captain Jim Hardison
Captain Rick Strickley
Engineer Gregg Peterson
Engineer Chris Peterson

FF/P Kevin Green
FF/P Brad Petersen
Fire Inspector Eric Guevin
Supervisor Keegan Schafer
Via Conference:
 Captain Chuck Salerno
 Engineer Jeff Peterson
 Engineer Brian Zabel
Administrative Assistant Kate Warner
Administrative Aid Carrie Nolting
Guest Bob Cook
Guest Patrick Atherton

1. Action Item: *Call to order.*

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 pm by Chairman Brad Dorton.

2. Action Item: *Pledge of Allegiance.*

Pledge of allegiance was led by Trustee Steve Siebel.

3. Action Item: *Roll call.*

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

4. Item: *Public comment.*

There was no comment.

5. Discussion and Possible Action Item:

Recommendation for the Fire Chief Selection
Process
Fire Chief Guy LeFever

Trustee Clason opened the discussion with his recommendations for the following changes to the proposed process:

- **Application** - add the requirement for a resume.
- **Residence Distance** - currently listed as "not to exceed 75 miles from a district fire station" change to not to exceed 25 miles. He expressed his concern about the fire chief's ability to return "in district" within a reasonable time in an emergency.
- **Announce (post) the fire chief opening** - He recommended posting the position in IAFC's career center for 30 days. As a governmental agency he felt it would be prudent to see what other candidates outside the organization would be interested.

Trustee Seibel commented that he agreed with the recommendation to review internal candidates first and not seek outside the organization unless there were not enough candidates. He added that a lot of time, energy and focus has been invested in developing staff and to go outside the organization could waste other people's time if the qualified candidates exist within.

Trustee Kjer added that our residents expect a high level of service and current staff understands that. He preferred to review internal candidates first.

Trustee Grant agreed that the culture that exists at TDFD is exceptional and finding an external candidate that gets that could be difficult. She prefers to only go to outside, if internal options have been exhausted.

Trustee Kjer and Siebel asked for some history on the 75 mile residential requirement. Chief LeFever confirmed that it used to be a requirement to live "in district", but as the cost of living in the district/at the lake began to climb over the years, slowly the number got pushed out farther and farther to accommodate current staff needs. Currently it is 75 miles for all positions. Now, with gas prices so high, vehicle use and wear and tear on district vehicles should be reviewed.

Trustee Clason made a motion to include a resume with the internal application. Trustee Grant 2nd the motion. No discussion. Motion carried 5-0.

Trustee Siebel moved to table the residential distance requirement for the fire chief. Trustee Kjer 2nd the motion. No discussion. Motion carried 5-0.

Trustee Clason stated that he sincerely hopes there are strong internal candidates, he acknowledges that there has been great effort invested in staff development, and he was not suggesting that TDFD does not have the strength internally. He stated again, that he believes as a governmental agency, we should review outside talent.

Trustee Grant stated that it is important to only seek outside candidates after the internal candidate pool is reviewed, and added that it is important that district employees know that they have a path to advancement at TDFD.

Trustee Siebel stated again that he could not support announcing the position to the outside and he will be very disappointed if we haven't created strong internal candidates.

Chief LeFever reiterated the original recommendation..."review internal candidates first and proceed to outside candidates if there is no interest, or the qualifications are not there". It is important to be fair to everyone in the process.

Public Comment:

Patrick Atherton (former TDFD Fire Board Trustee) told the board that 20 years ago, they went to the outside and hired with very poor results. The next board election, nine tax payers ran for three board seats, stimulated out of outrage over district issues. The board at that time began aggressively seeking tools and training resources to ensure that succession planning was a priority at TDFD.

Bob Cook (former TDFD Fire Board Trustee) added that that board has selected four fire chiefs in the past 20 years, all coming from the inside. The fire district employees knew they could progress through the ranks.

Trustee Siebel asked if they considered outside candidates at any time over that period. Bob Cook confirmed yes, every time. It was discussed to ensure that it was still the right decision for the district.

Trustee Kjer added that he has observed a trend with the school district superintendents and GWHS principals, in that outside candidates who do not fit the culture are not successful and do not stay. It has created a revolving door in key positions.

Trustee Grant concurred that an outside candidate would have a huge cultural learning curve which could be a distraction.

Trustee Grant made a motion to proceed with the recommendation to review internal candidates for fire chief first and only if there is a lack of interest or qualified candidates would they post the position to outside candidates. Trustee Siebel 2nd the motion. No discussion. Motion carried 4-1.

8. Action Item: *Adjourn.*

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:04 pm.

This meeting was recorded on audio tape.

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