

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PREVENTION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
**December 2, 2015**

**Those Present:**

Chairman Larry Schussel  
Vice Chairman Greg Felton  
Trustee Bill Kirschner  
Trustee Kevin Kjer  
Trustee Steve Seibel  
Fire Chief Ben Sharit  
Legal Counsel Devon Reese  
Fire Marshal Eric Guevin  
Fire Inspector Todd Stroup

Battalion Chief Todd Moss  
Battalion Chief Richard Nalder  
Captain Chuck Salerno  
Crew Supervisor Keegan Schafer  
Office Manager Kate Warner  
Accounting Specialist Carrie Nolting  
Administrative Assistant Casey O'Neill  
Accountant Bill Johnson  
Guest Ann Grant  
Kara Griffin, Grant Thornton  
Brian Wallace, Grant Thornton

**1. Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance.**

Pledge of allegiance was led by Trustee Kirschner.

**3. Roll Call**

Chairperson Schussel, Vice Chairman Felton, Trustee Kirschner, Trustee Kjer and Trustee Seibel were present. A quorum was present.

**4. Approval of the Agenda**

Vice Chairman Felton motioned to approve the agenda. Trustee Kjer seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

**5. Public Comment**

Ann Grant stated that up until November she was the only member of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) in the Tahoe Douglas District. Recently the coordinator of the program held a class to enroll more members and now there are six

new members. CERT meetings will be held the first Thursday of each month at the Station 23 classroom. CERT can be a valuable resource to use for district events and some emergency situations with the proper training.

**6. Approval of the Consent Calendar.**

Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes 10/28/15
- b. Monthly Expenditures
- c. Financials 07/31/15, 08/31/15 & 09/30/15

Trustee Kirschner motioned to approve the Consent Calendar items as presented. Trustee Seibel seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

**7. For Possible Action: Consent items moved forward**

None.

**8. Presentation: Employee Recognition**  
Fire Chief Ben Sharit

Chief Sharit recognized Crew Supervisor Schafer for achieving his Prescribed Fire Burn Boss II Certification (RXB2). The RXB2 designation is a national certification that recognizes that an individual is competent to manage all but the most complex prescribed fires. This certification is rare in federal and state fire agencies, but it is almost unheard of in a local fire protection district. Obtaining this certification is the culmination of fifteen years of effort for Supervisor Schafer and a testament to his competence and the respect he has earned from his peers.

Chief Sharit also congratulated Chief Moss for his promotion from Captain to Battalion Chief and presented him with his helmet shield.

**9. For Possible Action: Grant Thornton Annual Audit FY 2014-15**  
Kara Griffin, Managing Director, Audit Services  
Brian Wallace, Managing Partner, Audit Services

Griffin stated that Grant Thornton was hired to express their qualified opinion about whether the district's financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The audit timeline found in the

presentation documents demonstrates client acceptance, planning, preliminary risk assessment procedures and final fieldwork and deliverables. The presentation also addresses the specialists and third parties utilized to complete the audit including David & Johnson, LTD for accounting and ADPI for ambulance billing and collection. Overall, Griffin stated that the district improved greatly from the previous year's audit.

Working through the audit, Grant Thornton reviews areas of significant risks based on their assessments in grant, ambulance, fuels and contract revenue and the single audit. There were fourteen adjustments made and one significant deficiency found. Anytime an adjustment is made, the auditors need to evaluate it as a deficiency. Compared to last year's audit, Grant Thornton saw much improvement; there were several significant deficiencies found in the prior year's audit compared to just one this year. Furthermore, no significant deficiencies were found in grant compliance this year. The auditors removed the deficiency related to the single audit and the grant due to work done by the district's accounting personnel at David & Johnson and in house with Accounting Specialist Nolting. However, there were still quite a few journal entries that needed to be adjusted in order to successfully complete the audit.

Wallace added that due to the added complexity of the Governmental Accounting Standards (GASB) report, Grant Thornton recommends hiring a resource in house, such as a CPA or CFO, to oversee the audit and have a good understanding of these reports and the financial statements.

Griffin stated that the biggest issue in the current year was with the GASB 68 and bringing the pension liabilities onto the district books. The district adopted this guidance for the period ending June 30, 2015 and it did have a material impact on reported results. Each employer that participates in PERs must report their share of the underfunded liability for the plan, which was about 12 million for the district. This does not mean that the district is underfunded by 12 million, rather that PERs has unfunded liabilities and the district is responsible for paying the contribution rate. It is not an outflow of cash, but meant to explain to readers that there are some unfunded liabilities out there.

Accountant Johnson asked how the state would perceive the deficit in the district's proprietary and ambulance funds. As far as moving forward and budgeting he asked, is the district expected to allocate property taxes for the deficit?

Wallace replied he does not think the district is expected to because they are not the only agency that falls under this category.

Johnson stated that the ambulance fund actually has less revenue than expenses in the current year, so the deficit can potentially grow larger. He asked how the district should handle this in order to put the state on notice that we are potentially out of business. He added that if there are changes in procedures and we stop the inter fund transfer, than the ambulance fund could not support itself. In the past, there has always been a fund balance that builds up because of the transfers, but now the fund is starting from a negative balance.

Wallace stated that he does not believe the state can do anything because it is not a liability that the district can control and it does not affect the current year's expenditures. However, if the deficit continues to grow outside of any liabilities, than there may be some concerning questions to address in the future.

Johnson asked if it is possible to explain this in the MDA report.

Griffin stated that yes; she thinks this is a great idea because the MDA report is where you would explain the operations of the district in more layman's terms.

Vice Chairman Felton asked for clarification on the adjusted journal entries (AJE's) and passed adjusted journal entries (PAJE's); some were brought to the auditor's attention by the district and vice versa.

Griffin stated that some were worked on by both the auditors and the district, such as with the GASB 68. The district ultimately produced this adjustment.

Chief Sharit added that this was not tracked throughout the year because the GASB 68 just recently went into effect and the district did not have that information from PERs. Now moving forward, it will be tracked in the district financials. Another example of this is found in the AJE for consolidated tax (Item #10), because when the audit begins, we do not have what is needed and must reconcile in August/September when those numbers come in.

Vice Chairman Felton asked what items from the AJE and PAJE list concern the auditors most.

Griffin stated that collectively there needs to be a final look at the year-end cut offs in all areas. So, their recommendation is to have someone in house who can look at the books more closely and to ensure they are accurate.

Vice Chairman Felton then asked if the auditors feel better than last year given what appears to be a much cleaner internal process with a much cleaner result.

Griffin stated yes, it definitely feels better than last year. Particularly, there was a lot of improvement with cleaning up the grant processes. Furthermore, the GASB 68 complicated the process even more this year, however, the district staff and the accountants handled it well and were very responsive in getting items to the auditors. Again, she mentioned the district could improve by having one person to oversee all of the pieces and to review the final product for accuracy.

Vice Chairman Felton motioned to approve the action item. Trustee Kirschner seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

**10. Presentation:                      Discussion and possible approval of the 2016 Board of Trustees meeting calendar.**

Fire Chief Ben Sharit

Chief Sharit stated that the board meetings are to be held the fourth Wednesday of every month except for November and December due to the holidays. Also, due to legislative changes the May meeting can now be held on the fourth Wednesday of the month instead of the third.

Trustee Kirschner has a conflict on April 27<sup>th</sup> and requested to move it to April 20<sup>th</sup> instead.

Legal Counsel Reese and Chief Sharit verified that there are no conflicts with moving the meeting to April 20<sup>th</sup>.

Vice Chairman Felton has a conflict with the 3:00 pm meeting start time and requested to change it to 2:30 pm.

All other trustees, Chief Sharit and Legal Counsel Reese do not see any issues with changing the meeting time to 2:30 pm.

Trustee Kirschner motioned to approve the action item with noted changes. Trustee Seibel seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion approved 5-0.

**11. Report Item: Review of Monthly Fire District Activities. No action will be taken.**

Fire Chief Ben Sharit

**Employee Years of Service Recognition:**

Mechanic Gregg Gemmet	17 Years of Service
Firefighter/Paramedic Scott Vandover	5 Years of Service
Engineer Kyle Fine	5 Years of Service
Engineer Paul Apple	5 Years of Service
Engineer Justin Reddig	5 Years of Service

**Updates:**

Chief Sharit made conditional job offers to five Firefighter/Paramedics from the consortium.

**Assistant Chief Scott Baker** to start December 7<sup>th</sup>. Trustees are encouraged to stop by the office to meet with Chief Baker before the next board meeting. Chief Baker was previously employed as Division Chief with Reno Fire Department after twenty-one years of service. As Division Chief, he was in charge of facilities and equipment. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Finance and has an extensive background in leadership. We all look forward to having Chief Baker on board next week.

**Commercial Floor Area** - No responses from CFA advertisement published in the newspaper last month. Per Chief Sharit, there are a couple of entities in Douglas County that may be interested and will continue to run ad. after the first of the year.

**Financial Summary** – Money market balance was 1.1 million as of October 30<sup>th</sup>. In November, we transferred \$500,000 to the money market from TDFPD US bank accounts. Since then, we have purchased three \$200,000 CDs at .45% interest rate for six months and that are due to mature in May. The exact amounts will be provided in the January board report. And the first \$333,333 transfer to the RBIF was completed last week thanks to Financial Advisor Wayne Omel's assistance.

**Attachments:**

**Crew Performance Ratings for Out of District Responses** – Recognized Captain Salerno, Engineer Fine, Engineer Sanders and Firefighter/Paramedic Robidart for receiving an excellent evaluation on the Eleven Mile Fire in Idaho. Evaluator stated that

Captain Salerno "is an example of what leadership is all about". Also, recognized Captain Lucas, Engineer Pratt and Firefighter/Paramedics Vandover and Pruitt for receiving an excellent evaluation for their out of district response on the Butte Fire in California.

**Thank you letter from the Soroptomists** – TDFPD donated certificate for children's fire house birthday parties for their silent auction event.

**Thank you letter from the Forestry Crab Feed** – TDFPD donated \$250 toward the Forestry Crab Feed Firefighter Relief fund.

Station 24 crew taught first aid and fire safety to the **Girl Scouts at the 4-H Camp**.

**2015 Blue Ribbon Awards** – Forester Pickett was nominated for the Customer Service Award in a Public Agency for the second year in a row.

**Fire Safe Counsel** – Chief Sharit and Chief Brown from NLTFPD spoke to Congressman Amodei's office and Legal Counsel Reese spoke to the Trustee from the bankruptcy court in Reno today. Essentially hearing that the Department of Justice (DOJ) found out that they can pay tier one claimants going through the bankruptcy process and is looking to make preferential payments soon. Reese believes there will be money coming and assuming it will be here in another 6 months. This district and neighboring districts have worked well together on the whole process and Congress Amodei and staff has been very responsive. Reese believes the funds will be returned, but not sure if it will be for the entire amount.

**12. Report Item:                      Review of Fire District Division Reports. No action will be taken.**

Fire Chief Ben Sharit

**A-Shift Battalion Chief Todd Moss**

TDFPD received a \$1,000 donation from the Glenbrook Firework Committee, which went toward the **purchase of six ballistic vests and helmets for the paramedics to use for a potential active shooter event**. These are already being used by the bomb squad and are the highest rated gear in the market. The vest carriers contain ballistic rifle plates, which are ceramic and light weight, and the front contains medic supplies. The bomb squad recently participated in a Tactical Emergency Casualty Care training, which taught what to do with a patient during an event – stop the bleeding (use tourniquets, plug the hole, direct pressure) and get them out safely to a higher level of care. In an

active shooter scenario there would be law enforcement covering the front and back of the medics. Six sets will be kept on the B/C's rig.

Chairman Schussel asked if any of our neighboring districts have these vests yet.

Chief Moss replied that TDFPD is the first to have these in the area; however, East Fork Fire is currently looking into it and asked Chief Moss to present to them on what we have. Chief Moss would like all of our neighboring agencies to have uniformity in policies, procedures and equipment (PPE, trauma bags, etc.) because it will limit the confusion and chaos during an actual event.

### **B-Shift Battalion Chief Rich Nalder**

**Health and Safety** - Working on getting new PPE's for structure fire protection. The NFPA standards changed and are now required to replace every 10 years instead of every 15; also must inspect annually. Making sure everything is in compliance according to the new NFPA standards.

**Cancer in the Fire Service** - Studies show there is an increased risk for cancer. TDFPD is taking measures to help prevent: wash turn outs and hoods a minimum of every six months and after every structure fire and training, inspect PPE's every month and repair if needed, have two sets of turn outs and carry extra hoods on the B/C's rigs for swapping out.

**Facilities Projects** – Collecting bids to remodel the kitchen at Station 24; over 25 years old and want to replicate the kitchen at Station 23. Re-coating floors at Station 23 and working on minor repairs at all stations.

### **Chief Sharit for C-Shift Battalion Chief Jim Antti**

**Type 1 Engine Repaired**- Pump shift mechanism switched out by Mechanic Gemmet.

**Engine Spec Committee meeting** – Committee tasked to research and bid on a new Type 1 Engine by July 1. Trying to trim down and standardize equipment on all engines.

**Repairs needed on the Reserve Ambulance** - purchased last year from NTFPD – Engine blown and must replace the motor; NTFPD Fire Chief has agreed to assist with paying for repairs.

**Consortium Hiring Tests** - Participating agencies in the consortium to hire firefighter/paramedics consisted of Carson City Fire, TDFPD, NLTFFPD and NTFPD.



Recognized Chief Antti, Chief Moss, Captains Green, Cranch, Salerno and Spry, Engineer Fine, Firefighter/Paramedics Wade and Pruitt and Firefighter Serrano for their hard work and dedication to making this a successful testing process. There were 109 applicants, 90 eligible for test, 70 took the test and 44 passed, and 39 made it to the paramedic assessment and initial oral testing. Chief interviews were completed this week and five were offered jobs with TDFPD. They begin the Fire Academy on January 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Kingsbury Grade Structure Fire (trailer)** – Recognized on duty crews and fire prevention for their efforts; acted highly professional, Fire Marshal Guevin and Inspector Stroup were on scene within an hour and completed the investigation with the State Fire Marshal. Found to be an accidental cooking fire; no indication that there were smoke detectors in the trailer, which could have prevented the fatality.

Vice Chairman Felton asked Fire Marshal Guevin to expand on the **Hard Rock Casino's Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (C of O)**.

Fire Marshal Guevin stated that they have renewed their C of O with the Douglas County Building Department. Still working out issues with contractor as they are no longer licensed in the state of Nevada. Currently, working on a process with the Building Dept. to facilitate their final C of O for both the casino and the hotel tower.

**Fire Prevention attended a Marijuana Dispensary Conference in Colorado** – There are some risks that need to be addressed for prescribed home growers. This requires a great amount of electricity, water and pesticides for the growing process. There are already dispensaries in Incline Village and South Lake Tahoe and most likely more to come in the district. Need to be aware of risks and continue with education.

**13. Discussion: Confirm next meeting, with a proposed date of Wednesday, January 27, 2016 with a start time of 2:30 p.m. and possible agenda items.**

- Board Elections

Meeting confirmed for Wednesday, January 27, 2016 with a start time of 2:30 pm in the Station 23 classroom.

**Adjourn**

Trustee Kirschner motioned that the meeting be adjourned. Trustee Felton seconded the motion. Motion approved 5-0.

**Closed Session: Not needed at this meeting.**

This meeting was recorded on audio tape.

**Casey O'Neill  
Board Secretary  
Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District**

APPROVED