

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
September 20, 2023

Those Present:

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren
Chairman Larry Schussel
Vice Chair Greg Felton
Trustee Ben Johnson

Legal Counsel Alex Velto
Trustee Stacy Noyes
Trustee Janet Murphy

1. Call to Order.

Meeting was called to order at 2:30PM

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Schussel.

3. Roll Call.

Chairman Schussel, Vice Chair Felton, Trustee Johnson and Trustee Noyes were all present.
A quorum was met.

4. Approval of the Agenda.

Trustee Johnson made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.
Second: Vice Chair Felton.
Motion approved 4-0.

5. Public Comment: None.

6. Trustee Comments:

Janet Murphy arrived to the meeting at 2:33PM.

Vice Chair Felton congratulated Administrative Assistant Keeton and Finance Manager Nolting on their recent marriages. Felton also commended FF/PM Evans on the 80K race he completed.

7. Approval of the Consent Calendar.

- a. Board Meeting Minutes 08/16/23
- b. Monthly Expenditures
- c. Financials – 4/30/2023
- d. Job Descriptions – Training/Safety Captain

Trustee Noyes requested item a. Board Meeting Minutes 08/16/23 be removed from the consent agenda, which was accepted.

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Vice Chair Felton made a motion to approve the consent calendar, including items b-d of the Consent Calendar.

Second: Trustee Johnson

Motion Approved: 5-0

Trustee Johnson made a motion to approve item a. with Trustee Noyes abstaining from the vote due to her absence at the 8-16-23 meeting.

Second: Vice Chair Felton

Motion Approved: 4-0

8. Consent items moved forward: None.

9. Special Recognition

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren

Firefighter/Paramedic Chris Wade

9 Years of Service

Fire Mechanic Ron Allison

1 Year of Service

10. Discussion of Resolution #012-2023, proposing the adoption of the International Fire Code, International Building Code, International Existing Building Code, International Wildland Urban Interface Code, Uniform Mechanical Code and Uniform Plumbing Code as regulation; prescribing regulations governing conditions hazardous to life and property from fire, hazardous materials or explosion; providing for the issuance of permits for hazardous uses or operations; and establishing a bureau of fire prevention and providing officers therefore and defining their powers and duties. First reading – no action.

Fire Inspector Kris Rowlett

Fire Inspector Rowlett informed the Trustees that the document has been updated to reflect current District practices.

Trustee Noyes questioned why anyone would be opposed to this?

Rowlett responded that some residents may be opposed because of the WUI Code, specifically, for example, the code states that all new structures, including commercial and residential structures, are required to have sprinklers. The data shows that it is safer for residents to have sprinklers in their home to suppress fires *inside* the structure, to help occupants get out alive. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is always reviewing code and technology; therefore, there will be amendments and adoptions in the future.

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Vice Chair Felton asked about the “New 2018 Fire Code” and if it is the most current version? Rowlett responded that “2018” is intentional and is the most current version. Because the codes can change so often, Nevada adopts fire code every six years. If there are any significant changes, the changes would be brought to the Board.

Vice Chair Felton asked how retroactive the code is. Rowlett responded that there has to be a reason for the Fire Inspector to be on site.

Trustee Johnson asked how the process works for a commercial building and requiring sprinklers. Rowlett responded that if a structure is changing its occupancy, a permit for a monitored alarm system and sprinklers is required. However, if a business is changing owners and not changing the “use” of the building, it’s compliant, but if the business has a non-compliant kitchen hood, then the new kitchen hood must be up to code in order for the new owners to be in compliance.

Vice Chair Felton asked if the header of the resolution needs to say anything about issuing fines. Rowlett responded, “No because the fire code defines that.”

Vice Chair Felton referenced page 2 where the code states:

“The hot, dry weather typical of this area in the summer and fall coupled with prevailing winds from the southwest frequently affect wildfires that threaten or could threaten the Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District. Natural vegetation occurring in the area of the district is among the most highly flammable in the world.” Felton expressed concerns about the verbiage defining the District as something we’re unable to protect.

Rowlett responded that the reason that specific verbiage is documented is because the District is clarifying information about our topography on a more strict level than the State and Douglas County.

Vice Chair Felton suggested adopting a “more strict” code without the strong verbiage referenced.

Chief Lindgren responded that the District wants the residents and visitors to be aware of the risks that they have living here; he wants everyone to recognize the District is in a high fire, high severity zone.

Chairman Schussel requested that the District seek advice from our insurance team and ask them if the verbiage is appropriate or if the verbiage could pose future problem to the District. Chief Lindgren ensured that this verbiage is a western United States type verbiage because of the topography and terrain here, however he is very open to changing the verbiage if it’s going to be an issue.

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Chief Lindgren consulted with Legal Counsel Alex Velto, asking if he thinks it will create any liabilities for the District. Velto responded that the verbiage itself won't create any liability to the District, however he cannot speak to insurance rates as it is not his area of expertise.

Vice Chair Felton referenced page 5, *110.4 Violation Penalties*, and labeling failure to comply as a "misdemeanor". Felton asked if the District has the right to establish if a violation is a crime. Chief Lindgren confirmed yes.

Vice Chair Felton referenced page 8, *307.2 Permit Required*, specifically regarding burn permits. He noted there isn't any information about campgrounds. Chief Lindgren discussed that it depends on the campground. If it is USFS owned property, then the USFS sets the process for permitting, regardless of whose fire district jurisdiction it is.

Vice Chair Felton referenced page 10, *319.4.1 Fire Protection for Cooking Equipment*, specifically regarding auto fire extinguishers and cooking. He also referenced the section about high schools having auto and woodworking shops requiring an extinguisher, but it doesn't say anything about high school culinary classes having extinguishers.

Rowlett responded, the high school kitchen fits under the IFC section where it talks about kitchen requirements.

Vice Chair Felton asked what the difference is in requirements for residential sprinklers and commercial sprinklers. Inspector Rowlett responded that all new buildings (residential and commercial) regardless of size will require sprinklers. There are triggers based on residential or commercial additions or remodels. For example, if there is a change the "use of the building".

Vice Chair Felton referenced page 16, *903.2.9.3 Required Automatic Fire Sprinkler Systems in IRC Structures*, describing that fire walls and fire barriers shall not be used to separate fire areas. Should the District be discouraging people? Inspector Rowlett thanked Vice Chair Felton for the question and clarified that if a structure is "under a roof", garage included, then the *fire wall* between habitable and uninhabitable does not mean that the garage is now separate in regards to structure square footage. This requirement shall apply to any addition or remodel that increases the living space to greater than or equal to 3600 square feet. This shall include accessory dwellings. Felton requested the District look at the verbiage of the statement.

Vice Chair Felton asked if the extinguisher requirements for VHR are one per floor. Inspector Rowlett responded yes.

Vice Chair Felton highlighted that there are definitions on page 5 and again on page 28.

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Inspector Rowlett clarified that in the appendixes, there are clarifications between WUI Code, State Code, Plumbing Code, etc.

11. District Divisions

Assistant Chief Bryce Cranch

Chief Cranch shared a few photos from recent happenings of the District.

Vice Chair Felton commended the staff on the professionalism and dedication to helping while the President of the United States was in District.

Chief Lindgren also commended the staff for all the extra support during the President's visit.

Chief Cranch is very proud of the EOD support, HAZMAT team and the Tactical Medics.

Wildland Fire & Fuels FMO Mike Monaghan in place of Division Chief Keegan Schafer

The Shoreline Crew was the first resource on scene being on scene for the recent structure fire in Glenbrook.

Chief Lindgren advised that the staff worked very hard on the fire and protecting the origin. The effort everybody had out there was tremendous, it did spread into the wildland, but crews were able to put it out quickly. It was an example of how important our fuels reduction work is.

The combined effort and aggressive firefighting from the line staff and shoreline crew is the reason the fire was stopped. Inspector Garrison is performing the fire investigation. Chief Lindgren commended both East Fork Fire and South Lake Fire for covering the District while our crews worked on putting the fire out.

FMO Monaghan discussed Shoreline Crew teaming up with Zephyr Crew at the Lighthouse Canyon Fire – everyone is home safe.

FMO Monaghan discussed the updates on fuels reduction work. The crews will be teaming up with South Lake Tahoe Fire to start working in the meadow behind Motel 6.

Helicopter operations start in mid-October in conjunction with NV Energy.

Fire Inspector Kris Rowlett

Vice Chair Felton thanked Inspector Rowlett and the Fire Prevention Bureau (FPB) for aiding in getting the event center open. Trustee Johnson thanked Inspector Rowlett for his diligence on a very complicated project.

EOD Canine Tracker ensured the President's safety as well, as he was involved in sweeps along the highways and other travel routes.

Next weekend will be the first event at the Tahoe Blue Event Center.

Finance Manager Carrie Nolting in place of Administrative Division Officer Kate Warner

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Nolting discussed the upcoming financial statement audit. The auditors will be on site next week. No questions.

12. Review of Monthly Fire District Activities.

No action will be taken.

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren

The District was successful in receiving three different grants:

- Operation Save the Tahoe Basin
- Canine Temperature Control Unit
- Fire Explorer Program

The District has a public education program for each grade now, including preschool. The program will be led by Inspector Garrison and the District will be partnering with the Whittell High School for the Fire Explorer program to engage 9-12th graders.

13. Public Comment

Vice Chair Felton discussed that the former Marine 24 repair is officially done.

Trustee Noyes got to go on a ride along on the new Marine 24. Chief Lindgren advised that Marine24 is in full service and has been used in some rescues and some support calls.

The meeting was paused at 4:30pm.

The meeting called to order at 4:38

14. Open Meeting Law

Alex Velto, Legal Counsel

Legal Counsel Velto presented Open Meeting Law (OML).

OML is a shorthand name for Chapter 241 of the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) which place certain requirements on Public Bodies. According to NRS 241.010(1), “all public bodies exist to aid in the conduct of the people’s business. It is the intent of the law that their actions be taken openly and that their deliberations be conducted openly.”

Velto’s PowerPoint is available upon request. Through this training, it is the District’s intent to ensure that all public officials and staff are compliant with NRS.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:01PM

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Discussion: Confirm next meeting, with a proposed date of Wednesday, October 18, 2023 with a start time of 2:30 pm and possible agenda items

Submitted by:
Amanda Keeton
Fire Board Clerk