

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
January 29, 2025

Those Present:

Chief Scott Lindgren

Chairman Ben Johnson

Vice Chair Stacy Noyes (virtual)

Legal Counsel Paul Cotsonis (virtual)

Trustee John Breaux

Trustee Dan Kruger

Trustee Ben Ward

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 2:35 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

HRS Vindel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Public Comment.

Terry Huff, District resident and Firewise Coordinator for Zephyr Heights, expressed gratitude for the support that was received from the District. He specifically thanked Chief Schafer, DSE Inspector Johnson, Zephyr Crew and the Admin team for their impressive coordination and efforts in assisting Zephyr Heights in achieving the status as a “Firewise Community.”

4. Swearing in New Trustees

Chief Lindgren swore in the new Trustees.

5. Roll Call:

John Breaux, Ben Johnson, Dan Kruger and Ben Ward were all present and Stacy Noyes attended virtually.

6. Approval of the Agenda:

Trustee Kruger made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Second: Trustee Breaux

Motion approved: 5-0

7. Discussion and possible action to nominate and appoint Board Officers to the 2025 Board of Trustees. (From the following candidates – John Breaux, Ben Johnson, Dan Kruger, Stacy Noyes and Ben Ward)

Vice Chairman Ben Johnson

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Trustee Noyes made a motion to nominate Trustee Johnson as the Chairman.
Second: Trustee Breaux
Motion approved: 5-0

Trustee Kruger made a motion to nominate Trustee Noyes as the Vice Chair.
Second: Trustee Breaux
Motion approved: 5-0

8. Trustee Comments:

Chairman Johnson thanked the District for the *New Trustee Orientation*.

Trustees Breaux, Kruger and Ward echoed Chairman Johnson's thoughts and were very thankful for the hard work that was put it to making the orientation happen.

Vice Chair Noyes was unable to attend the orientation, however she recognized how well-structured it appeared from both agendas. The positive feedback from the Trustees reflects a strong start to the year with a new Board.

9. Approval of the Consent Agenda

- a. Board Meeting Minutes 12/18/2024
- b. PEBP Other Postemployment Benefits of Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District
GASB 75 Actuarial Report for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2024
- c. Financials – 07/31/2024
- d. Personal Policy – 2.23.3 (Outside Work Procedure)-3.16.4
- e. Job Description – Accounting Specialist I

Vice Chair Noyes made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.
Second: Trustee Ward
Motion approved: 5-0

10. Consent items moved forward:

11. Special Recognition

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren

January

Battalion Chief Brandon Brady	19 years
Battalion Chief Steve Prather	19 years

Captain Ben Pratt	18 years
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Engineer Greg Koeck

9 years

Captain/Crew Foreman Mark Waite

3 year FT (seasonal since 2019)

Engineer/Squad Leader Nathaniel Braun

3 year FT (seasonal since 2018)

12. Discussion and possible action to accept settlement agreement with former employee William Morgan.

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren

Trustee Breaux made a motion to accept the settlement agreement with former employee William Morgan.

Second: Trustee Kruger

Motion approved: 5-0

13. District Divisions

Wildland Fire & Fuels - Battalion Chief Matt Fogarty in place of Division Chief Keegan Schafer

Both Zephyr and Shoreline Crews are prescribed burning in the North Shore at Dollar Point. The conditions are not great due to the significant amount of snow.

Hiring:

- Seasonal Crew Member positions close this Friday
- After screening applications, WF&F will conduct interviews mid-February

Trustee Kruger asked for more information about the prescribed burning near Tramway. Chief Fogarty emphasized the critical importance of this area and noted that the District, in partnership with Tahoe Village HOA, is managing burn piles along Tramway Drive under the NDF burn plan.

Chief Lindgren addressed air pollution control, noting the numerous regulations under the Multi-Agency Coordinating (MAC) group and Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team (TFFT). He highlighted the expertise of the Zephyr and Shoreline Crews in managing burns to minimize smoke settling into neighborhoods. Their efforts have earned widespread praise, including commendation from the North Tahoe Fire Chief, Chief Leighton, who specifically recognized the Crews outstanding work, eliminating air pollution issues they've had in their District in previous years.

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Operations - Battalion Chief Brandon Brady in place of Assistant Chief/Special Ops Kevin Lawson

Chief Brady mentioned the mass casualty incident (MCI) that occurred at Heavenly Ski Resort. The District transported 5 patients: 4 by ambulance and 1 by Care Flight.

Chairman Johnson acknowledged the efforts and teamwork in responding to the MCI, however he requested further clarification on why information was limited. Chief Brady responded, addressing the way that the call for service came into dispatch. It came in as a single patient, not as a multiple patient incident and while the ambulance was on the way, further information came through regarding the possibility of multiple patients. PIO Turner explained that news stations nationwide were requesting information on the incident. The District was cautious in its response to ensure no unauthorized details were released during the ongoing investigation.

Fire Prevention Bureau - Assistant Chief/Fire Marshal Bryce Cranch

PIO Turner is organizing an exercise challenge for the Fire Prevention Bureau, featuring an accountability board and encouraging participation from other divisions.

Kudos to HRS Vindel for the recruitment of the Fire Inspector I. There were 21 applicants and 9 of them moved forward into the interview stage.

Chairman Johnson inquired about the fire science program at George Whittell High School. Chief Cranch reported that Chief Fogarty and Chief Lucas have taken the lead in teaching, and the program is going very well. Chief Lindgren advised that the Superintendent is working on transportation for valley students to attend the program. Trustees are welcome to arrange a tour with Chief Lindgren to observe the program firsthand.

Trustee Ward inquired whether the fire science program is available to students residing in California. Chief Lindgren explained that California students are not currently eligible for the program but noted plans to explore that option in the future.

Administration - Finance Manager Carrie Nolting-Bammer in place of ADO Kate Warner

FM Nolting-Bammer advised that there is one correction to the Administration Division report: The ambulance bid states the delivery of the ambulance will be in February, but that date should be listed as July.

Federal Grant Freeze - Tahoe Regional Conservation District is researching this to see how it affects the District. The Admin division is closely monitoring the situation.

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2nd Annual Silver State Women in Fire:

- 2025 Dates: May 30th & 31st – first day orientation, second day “Training Day”
- Instagram account created: sswif.nv
- Supported by Northern Nevada Fire Chief’s Association and local fire departments
- All inquiries can be emailed to sswif.nv@gmail.com
- Trustees are encouraged to join for the second day to see what it’s all about!

14. Possible discussion and action to collaborate with Kingsbury General Improvement District (KGID) to ensure clear access for firefighters to fire hydrants during the winter months.

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren

Chief Lindgren provided an overview of the situation with KGID, explaining that while firefighters have traditionally assisted with clearing snow from fire hydrants, the responsibility ultimately lies with the water purveyor.

Chairman Johnson and Trustee Kruger volunteered to collaborate with KGID.

Trustee Noyes made a motion to form a subcommittee of Chairman Johnson and Trustee Kruger as the selected Board members to collaborate with KGID Board members to ensure clear access for firefighters to fire hydrants during the winter months.

Second: Trustee Breaux

Approved: 5-0

15. Review of Monthly Fire District Reports and Activities and Annual Goals and Objectives. No action will be taken.

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren

No questions.

As the chairman of the Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) group, Chief Lindgren highlighted discussions that are happening regarding the potential impact of the Southern California fires on the Tahoe Basin and surrounding areas. Chief Lindgren emphasized the importance of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), describing it as a critical document that facilitates access to grants and other funding opportunities for wildfire mitigation and preparedness efforts.

In this document, the District was able to establish the four priorities:

- Fuels reduction along evacuation routes
- Increase fuels reduction around critical infrastructure (radio towers, communication sources, etc)

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- Fuel breaks around communities
- Tactical and strategical fuel breaks

In response to the devastating fires in Southern California, the community has expressed interest in a town hall meeting to discuss wildfire mitigation and preparedness efforts. The District is planning a community meeting to answer questions and to discuss topics such as defensible space, home hardening, fuel breaks and the “Ready, Set, Go!” program. The goal is to educate residents on opportunities to enhance home safety. The community will be notified as soon as dates are confirmed.

“RockRose Risk” - Insurance company that is dedicated to assisting people who face challenges in obtaining or renewing traditional property insurance due to high wildfire risks. They collaborate with mitigation partners to help clients reduce their risk profiles.

Chairman Johnson highlighted the fuel breaks presentation by Chief Fogarty and Chief Schafer, emphasizing the importance of showcasing how shaded fuel breaks significantly contributed to controlling the Davis Fire.

Chief Lindgren shared that AAA Insurance agents visited him at the Davis Fire burn scar, where he demonstrated the effectiveness of the fuel breaks. He emphasized how the fuel breaks helped protect homes.

16. Public Comment

None.

17. Confirm next meeting, Wednesday, February 19, 2025 at 2:30pm; possible agenda items.

Chief Lindgren proposed moving the meeting to February 26th because of the audit. The meeting has been rescheduled for Wednesday, February 26, 2025.

Meeting adjourned at: 4:01pm

Submitted by:

Amanda Van De Hey
District Specialist