

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
December 17, 2025

Those Present:

Chief Scott Lindgren
Chairman Ben Johnson
Vice Chair Stacy Noyes
Trustee John Breaux

Trustee Dan Kruger
Trustee Ben Ward (Virtual)
Legal Counsel Paul Cotsonis (Virtual)

1. Call to Order

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 2:31 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

Finance Manager Nolting-Bammer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Chairman Johnson, Vice Chair Noyes, Trustee Breaux, Trustee Kruger and Trustee Ward (Virtual) were all present. A quorum was met.

4. Approval of Agenda

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

Second: Vice Chair Noyes

Motion approved: 5-0

5. Public Comment

Chief Lindgren recognized Battalion Chief Ryan Rizzuto of the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District and his wife, Danielle who tragically passed away in a car accident. He led a moment of silence in their memory.

6. Trustee Comments

Trustee Kruger asked legal counsel how the Board can collectively develop expectations for the Fire Chief without violating public meeting laws. He was concerned that the new scoring scale changed the outcome and some questions were vague.

Chairman Johnson noted that the District did make substantial changes to the evaluation form and recommended a two-board member committee to continue improvements to the evaluation process and form.

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Legal Counsel Cotsonis advised that revisions to the evaluation may be developed by a committee and then brought back to the full Board for approval. However, discussion of the actual evaluation must be conducted in open session.

Chairman Johnson explained that there were a few options: to form a two-member Board committee to work with Chief Lindgren, to develop performance expectations for subsequent Board review and approval, or to conduct the full discussion in an open meeting

Trustee Kruger discussed the difficulties of collaborating with the whole Board due to public meeting requirements under open meeting law.

Chairman Johnson stated that a framework is in place and more can be discussed later during the agenda item.

Chairman Johnson visited the standpipe operations training conducted at Bally's last week and was very impressed with staff expertise and performance.

Trustee Ward shared that he created a project management template for the revenue generating workshop, including action items and tracking towards goals. He will follow up with the committee leads and present at the January workshop.

7. Approval of the Consent Agenda

- a. Board Meeting Minutes 11/19/2025
- b. Letter of Support for Chief Lindgren
- c. Department of Taxation Extension Letter

Chairman Johnson explained why item b is not completed and therefore will be removed from the consent agenda. It will be written with the help of Trustee Ward and added to the January Board meeting consent agenda.

Trustee Breaux made a motion to approve the consent agenda with exception of item b.

Second: Vice Chair Noyes

Motion approved: 5-0

8. Consent items moved forward:

None.

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9. Special Recognition

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren

Service Recognition:

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren	5 Years of Service
Fire Prevention Specialist/PIO Michelle Turner	3 Years of Service
Fire Inspector Amanda Van De Hey	3 Years of Service
Defensible Space Inspector Max Johnson	1 Year
	Hired in 2024 as Seasonal
Crew Member Braden Duflath	1 Year
	Hired in 2023 as Seasonal
Engineer/Squad Leader Steve Rausch	1 Year
	Hired in 2022 as Seasonal
Crew Member Matt Weir	1 Year
	Hired in 2022 as Seasonal
Crew Member Tyler Black	1 Year
	Hired in 2023 as Seasonal

Badge Pinning Friday 12/19 – *Postponed*

David Martland – Promoted from Firefighter to Firefighter/Paramedic
Josh Wesson – Promoted from Firefighter to Firefighter/Paramedic
Ryder Thomas – Lateral Firefighter/Paramedic
Amanda Van De Hey – Promoted from Fire Inspector Trainee to Fire Inspector I
Gunnar Wood – Promoted from Crew Member to Engineer/Squad Leader

Chairman Johnson spoke about Chief Lindgren's 5 years of service, his amazing amount of accomplishments and thanked him for his service.

10. Discussion and possible approval of the Fire Chief's Annual Performance Evaluation

Chairman Ben Johnson and Trustee Kruger

Chairman Johnson said this year's evaluation used a new, stricter scoring system, making top scores harder to earn and not comparable to last year. A five was reserved for exceptional performance, reflecting the community's high expectations. He said the process led to productive discussions, highlighted areas for improvement, and acknowledged shortcomings by the board. Overall, he described it as a learning experience that improved accountability and clarified the need for clear, objective goals.

Trustee Kruger said the evaluation should be honest and objective, but noted the new form produced a lower overall score than his intuitive assessment, suggesting issues with its

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construction. He emphasized the process is still evolving and said he believes it is moving in the right direction.

Trustee Breaux said the fire service is held to near-perfect standards, where anything less than exceptional is seen as failure, creating significant stress due to the critical nature of the work.

Vice Chair Noyes said the new scoring system was a significant change, but clearer definitions helped reinforce that a “3” means meeting expectations and higher scores should be hard to earn. She acknowledged the disappointment lower scores caused, but emphasized evaluations are meant for honest feedback and growth.

Chairman Johnson said he supports the current evaluation scoring system. He described the process as involving tough but fair and honest conversations that identified concerns and opportunities for growth, which the Fire Chief is committed to addressing.

Chairman Johnson emphasized that the scores from this year’s evaluation cannot be compared to last year’s.

Trustee Ward said scores matter less than identifying gaps, giving fair feedback, and setting clear goals to address them.

Chief Lindgren appreciates the feedback and will try to do the best in the future.

Due to Chairman Johnson’s historical knowledge, it was decided that he and Trustee Kruger would serve on the committee to develop the Fire Chief’s expectations and goals for the coming year.

Trustee Kruger made a motion to delay the approval of the Fire Chief’s Performance Evaluation and establish a committee to develop expectations to be approved at the next meeting.

Second: Trustee Breaux

Motion approved: 5-0

11. Request from Chief Lindgren to renegotiate his employment contract

Fire Chief Lindgren

Chief Lindgren said he has been with the District for five years, his contract is open-ended, and he would like to renegotiate it to address some cleanup and ensure consistency.

Vice Chair Noyes felt that it would be more appropriate to consider renegotiations after outstanding contract issues and delayed evaluations were caught up to ensure fairness. Trustee Kruger agreed that taking care of other employees first was important.

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The Trustees agreed that they are open to an initial meeting to understand the scope of request. Trustee Ward added that performance evaluation and clear expectation should be finalized first.

Chief Lindgren wants to renegotiate his open-ended contract to clarify language, ensure consistency with other chief contracts, and formalize processes like time-off approvals. He has regional comparables to guide updates and sees the process as straightforward.

Vice Chair Noyes and Trustee Breaux were chosen to be on the committee to start negotiations with Chief Lindgren.

Chairman Johnson asked Lindgren to share the data and contracts he has already collected with the committee.

Vice Chair Noyes made a motion to create a committee to start discussion with Chief Lindgren on potentially renegotiating his employment contract after the completion of the evaluation and expectation process.

Second: Trustee Breaux

Motion approved: 5-0

12. Discussion and possible approval of the 2026 Board of Trustees meeting schedule.

Chairman Ben Johnson

Finance Manager Nolting-Bammer recommended moving the Board meetings to the fourth Wednesday of each month. She explained that meetings are often shifted anyway due to events including the budget hearing, budget augmentations and the audit. Moving it would reduce constant date changes.

Board members discussed potential conflict because personal scheduling was based on the 3rd Wednesday of every month. Chief Lindgren pointed out that the next meeting is always confirmed at the end of each meeting and can be discussed further then.

Trustee Kruger made a motion to change the standard Board meeting date to the 4th Wednesday of every month as presented.

Second: Trustee Breaux

Motion approved: 5-0

13. Nevada PERS Reporting Requirements – Update and Potential Board Action

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren

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Finance Manager Nolting-Bammer explained that in February, the Public Employee Retirement System of Nevada (PERS) flagged that their reporting method might underreport employee wages over long careers. For example, one 32-year employee's wages were underreported by \$5 over that period.

The issue stems from the District paying employees based on actual hours worked rather than an average or standard number of hours like the "112 hours" used by other districts. This system was approved by PERS in 2016. However, PERS is now interpreting reporting rules differently and wants wages and hours reported based on the 112-hour standard rather than actual hours worked.

Since February, the finance team has been trying to develop a reporting solution. Challenges include tracking overtime and adjusting wages across decades-long careers while meeting PERS' system requirements. PERS reviewed the situation but declined to take responsibility, leaving the District to create its own "banking" system to adjust hours and wages for reporting purposes.

Recently, the team found a workaround in the PERS reporting system. For 24-hour employees, they can input two "full-time equivalent" (FTEs) so that pay periods are adjusted (e.g., 96 hours reported as 48, or 120 hours as 60). They've communicated this to PERS, and while one contact approved the approach, another is still reviewing it.

If this FTE work around does not work, the District will be revisiting it and potentially have the Fire Chief and Chairman sign a letter to PERS.

Vice Chair Noyes made a motion that directs the Fire Chief, Finance Manager and staff to continue discussion with PERS and if a swift resolution is not reached, the Fire Chief and Board Chairman will draft and sign a letter requesting resolution or to meet with the PERS board.

Second: Trustee Kruger

Motion approved: 5-0

14. Post Retirement Trust Actuarial Budget

Chairman Johnson

Chairman Johnson explained that the Post-Retirement Trust's (PRT) actuary used more conservative assumptions than PERS, which may overstate future liabilities. He suggested the board consider not making this year's contribution to the trust, noting that many employees may not stay for their full careers, so the projected benefits could be higher than necessary. He wants input from the PRT board and the Union, and asked for a recommendation to be brought back to the board for discussion at a future meeting.

Chief Lindgren recapped that the actuary recommended a catch-up payment for the previous fiscal year, plus contributions for the current and next year to stay on track. The department paid

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the catch-up, around \$100,000, and had budgeted \$600,000 for the current year based on the actuary's recommendation. He reiterated that the Board is now considering postponing the \$600,000 payment due to other circumstances.

Captain Darr noted that discussion on this topic was not agendaized for the upcoming PRT meeting on Friday, December 19th, but could be added to the March meeting.

HR Specialist Nalder will add the contribution topic to the PRT agenda for March.

Chairman Johnson made a motion to ask the PRT for a recommendation towards changing our contribution for this fiscal year.

Second: Vice Chair Noyes

Motion approved: 5-0

15. District Divisions

Fire Prevention and Administration - Chief Cranch

Chief Cranch shared photos from recent activities, including:

- The Career and Technical Education (CTE) event at Douglas High School with George Whittell Fire Science students participating in a demonstration.
- A test of the new hood system conducted by Inspector Rowlett at a commercial kitchen in the Golden Nugget.
- Ongoing construction at Caesar's outdoor pool and convention center.

Wildland Fire and Fuels – Chief Fogarty

The Wildland Division is making progress on several fuel reduction projects. They are close to completing burning on the Khashoggi property, pending favorable weather this week. They also finished burning urban lots in upper Kingsbury and continued to collaborate with Summit Village and Mike Paulson on fuel reduction efforts. Additionally, work on the Johnson property between Uppaway Estates and Glenbrook, including mastication and chipping is nearly complete, connecting with prior efforts in the area and marking a decade-long goal achieved.

The Community Wildfire Defense Grant Program (CWDG) will be active for next season in the Zephyr Heights area and the Glenbrook area.

Operations – Chief Brady

Chief Lindgren updated that the relationship with Kingsbury General Improvement District (KGID) is going well and the joint building project is moving forward.

Chief Brady discussed the boundary drop and mutual aid agreements with East Fork Fire Protection District and the City of South Lake Tahoe Fire.

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Chairman Johnson stated call location percentages were requested from Engineer/Paramedic Fording and that out of district call volumes could be justification for expanding funding.

Vice Chair Noyes asked if the South Lake Tahoe Joint Powers Authority (JPA) ambulance service could help with standby at events that are causing excessive mandatory overtime.

Chief Lindgren said using South Lake Tahoe JPA for event standby is complicated due to different medical protocols across agencies. The District is strained by a growing number of events, which have increased mandatory overtime. While they are exploring ways to reduce overtime, such as using on-duty staff for some events, doing so would reduce emergency coverage elsewhere in the District.

Chief Brady explained that there is one month remaining in the Capital City Regional Fire Academy, with Burn Week scheduled for January 15–20. He invited the Trustees to observe the training and offered them the opportunity to enter a controlled, burning building while wearing full protective gear.

Chief Brady reported that the Captain's Academy is being led by Captain Isenberg and Captain Darr. The Academy will be held the second week of January and includes a week of in-class instruction.

Chief Brady reported that Chief Lucas's primary project is implementing new software to track narcotics and securing grant funding to support it.

Chief Brady reported that Chief Prather wanted to recognize the Shoreline crew for painting and upgrading the Senior Center building.

16. Fire Chief Report

Fire Chief Scott Lindgren

Chief Lindgren reported progress on county radio system upgrades, noting that both an executive working group and a technical working group are now in place. The county has allocated \$3.4 million, with substantial funds already spent, and improvements are beginning to be seen, particularly in the valley and with the Douglas County Sheriff's Department.

Captain Norwood explained that radio coverage remains inconsistent, with significant dead zones in certain areas, including Spooner Summit and along Highways 50 and SR 28. Handheld radios are largely ineffective in these areas, and mobile radio communication is unreliable. Due to varied terrain in some regions, a precise coverage percentage is difficult to quantify.

Chief Brady highlighted the formation of both an executive working group and a technical working group to address system deficiencies. While Tahoe Douglas Fire has historically been a lower priority due to district size, shared coverage gaps affecting law enforcement have elevated the urgency. County leadership, including CFO Kathy Lewis and County Manager Jennifer, is

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now actively engaged. Ms. Lewis has significantly increased her understanding of radio systems and is participating in a ride-along to better assess operational needs.

Infrastructure Improvements Under Discussion:

- Planned relocation of the D.L. Bliss repeater to improve line-of-sight coverage.
- Exploration of additional sites, including Angel's Roost, Boulder Court, and East Peak.
- Department-wide radio reprogramming in anticipation of future system expansion.
- Ongoing concern that the District currently relies on outdated phone-line technology to connect to dispatch, creating a critical vulnerability.
- Evaluation of LTE, cable, and future fiber connections as backup options, with emphasis on establishing a reliable repeater link to the valley.

Trustee Kruger emphasized the importance of ensuring county funds are spent effectively and not on partial or insufficient solutions. He advocated for the East Peak site due to its potential to provide broad lake, valley, and rescue coverage. Vice Chair Noyes noted that radio communications were ranked as the top priority in strategic planning.

Captain Norwood updated that they are working on utilizing grants to purchase Starlink, this would outfit the Battalion Chief rigs as mobile repeaters.

17. Public Comment

None.

18. Confirm next meeting, Wednesday, January 28th 2026 at 2:30pm, possible agenda items

Next meeting confirmed to be on January 21st, 2026

19. Adjourn

Meeting Adjourned at 4:56PM

Submitted by:

Kathy Donovan

Administrative Assistant/Board Clerk