

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
February 25, 2026

Those Present:

Interim Fire Chief Bryce Cranch
Chairman Ben Johnson
Vice Chair Stacy Noyes (Virtual)
Trustee John Breaux

Trustee Dan Kruger
Trustee Ben Ward
Legal Counsel Kara Hayes

1. Call to Order

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 2:33 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

Chief Cranch led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

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

4. Approval of Agenda

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

Second: Trustee Kruger

Motion approved: 5-0

5. Public Comment

Lisa Hokholt, a Zephyr Heights resident and Firewise program leader, expressed concern that the previous meeting was scheduled during severe weather. She also provided an update on the neighborhood's Firewise accomplishments, including the removal of 1,175 cubic yards of green waste. She highlighted the success of the Green Waste Trailer program and expressed hope that it will continue.

Maryon Tilly, resident of Zephyr Heights, described community wildfire mitigation efforts, including neighborhood clean-up work, defensible space improvements, and appreciation for the trailer program, while emphasizing the importance of continued Firewise activities and volunteer participation.

6. Trustee Comments

Chairman Johnson reaffirmed strong support for the department's defensible space and wildfire mitigation programs, emphasized the board's continued commitment under interim Chief Cranch to support community fire risk reduction efforts.

7. Approval of the Consent Agenda

- a. Board Meeting Minutes 01/21/2026

Trustee Breaux made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Second: Trustee Ward

Motion approved: 5-0

8. Consent items moved forward:

None.

9. Discussion and Possible Action to Select One Member of the Board of Trustees to Serve as the District Representative on the Insurance Advisory Committee, as required by the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) Between Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District and the Union.

Chief Cranch

Chief Cranch requested a board member join the Insurance Advisory Committee to review employee health insurance concerns, explore alternative plans, and help develop recommendations ahead of upcoming contract deadlines in March.

Trustee Ward stated that he would be happy to help.

Trustee Breaux made a motion to appoint Trustee Ward to the Insurance Advisory Committee

Second: Trustee Kruger

Motion approved: 5-0

10. Discussion and Possible Action to Appoint a Two-Member Recruitment Subcommittee for the Position of Fire Chief

The Board will deliberate on and may take action to appoint two (2) members of the Board of Trustees to serve on a temporary subcommittee. The primary responsibility of this subcommittee will be to coordinate the recruitment process, review applicant qualifications, and recommend finalists for the position of Fire Chief to the full Board at a future public meeting.

Chairman Ben Johnson

Chairman Johnson emphasized the need for a fair and transparent process to select a new Fire Chief, including consideration of both internal and external candidates. He stated potential participants could include regional Fire Chiefs, the school district superintendent, and district residents, and encouraged community engagement to gather input on finalists. He also requested HR support for the process and emphasized the importance of maintaining confidentiality throughout.

Chairman Johnson proposed that Trustee Kruger and Trustee Breaux serve on the committee as they have already worked on selecting an interim Fire Chief.

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The board agreed that the process should not be rushed and may take approximately 4-6 months.

The committee shall seek guidance from legal counsel throughout the process to ensure compliance with open meeting laws and confidentiality requirements. The committee shall also consult with the Union and consider their perspective.

Trustee Ward made a motion to appoint Trustee Breaux and Trustee Kruger as the Two-Member recruitment subcommittee for the position of Fire Chief

Second: Chairman Johnson

Motion approved: 5-0

11. Discussion and Possible Action to Define and Approve the Scope of Authority, Duties, and Roles for the Interim Fire Chief and the Retiring Fire Chief During the Leadership Transition. The Board will deliberate on and may take action to formalize the specific powers and responsibilities of the incoming Interim Fire Chief and the Outgoing/Retiring Fire Chief. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Assigning full operational command and statutory powers to the Interim Fire Chief.
- Defining the Retiring Chief's transition role as an "Administrative Advisor" focused on knowledge transfer, budget duties, and capital project handovers.
- Establishing spending limits, personnel hiring/firing restrictions, and reporting structures for both roles during the transition period.

Chairman Ben Johnson

Chairman Johnson explained that at the previous Board meeting, Interim Fire Chief Bryce Cranch was granted full operational control. He stated that the purpose of this discussion is to define the limits or "guardrails" for retiring Fire Chief Scott Lindgren to ensure appropriate actions are taken during the transition.

The transition guardrails include:

- **Preservation of Records:** No deletion, alteration, or removal of any District records, including pay data, contracts, or electronic communications (emails, texts) on District-issued devices or systems.
- **Financial Controls:** A not-to-exceed limit of \$1,000 on any expenditure or purchase order without the assistant Chief's prior written co-signature.
- **Personnel Actions:** Suspension of authority to hire, terminate, promote, discipline, or otherwise modify employee compensation, benefits, or employment records.
- **Contractual Activity:** No execution, amendment, or renewal of agreements with outside vendors.

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- **Public and Media Communications:** All public or mass communications regarding District business or leadership transition to be coordinated through the PIO and/or Legal Counsel to ensure accuracy and compliance.
- **IT and Systems Access:** Restriction of administrative or super-user access to District servers, financial systems, or databases to prevent unintended changes to historical records.
- **Ongoing Fiduciary Duty:** A reminder of your continuing fiduciary obligations to the District through your final hour of service.

Questions were raised regarding a trip planned by Chief Lindgren; however, it was determined that Chief Cranch has the authority to decide how and whether department resources are used appropriately and will handle the situation.

Chief Cranch and the Board agreed that he has the full purchasing power that is outlined in the Purchasing Policy.

Trustee Breaux made a motion to approve the guardrails as outlined in this meeting and in the February 2nd email sent to Scott Lindgren, to remain in effect for the duration of his employment with the District.

Second: Trustee Ward

Motion approved: 5-0

12. Discussion and Possible Action to Revise the Catastrophic Leave Policy

Chief Cranch

Chief Cranch explained that recent employee situations prompted discussion of possible policy variances, but both cases were resolved. No revisions are currently being proposed but future updates may be considered.

Chairman Johnson noted that this is a positive move toward a more formal policy change process for the future.

There was discussion about the Catastrophic Leave Policy, which lets employees use donated leave when they run out of their own time due to illness, injury, or family needs while waiting for workers' compensation or recovery. It helps protect pay and benefits and works with other options like disability, light duty, and shift trades under the CBA. The Board was informed about situations where employees could run out of leave before workers' comp is approved, and the importance of applying the policy consistently and fairly.

13. Special Recognition

Fire Chief

Battalion Chief Matt Fogarty	12 Years of Service
Engineer/Squad Leader Matthew Hakin	4 Years of Service Hired as seasonal in 2020
Engineer/Squad Leader Dylan Torgerson	4 Years of Service Hired as seasonal in 2020
FF/PM Bryce Chamberlain	2 Years of Service
FF/PM Matthew Misquez	2 Years of Service
FF/PM Evan Brown	2 Years of Service
FF/PM Nathan Waite	2 Years of Service
FF/PM Logan Ito	2 Years of Service
Firefighter Chase Amestoy	1 Year of Service

Completed Probation:

Firefighter/Paramedic Jeffrey Fairley
Firefighter Chase Amestoy
Engineer Ben Arrate

14. District Divisions

Wildland Fire & Fuels – Chief Mike Monaghan

Chief Monaghan shared photos and provided an overview of 2025 activities, including fire assignments, completed training, community programs, fires assisted on, prescribed burns, and renovations to crew quarters.

Operations – Chief Chris Lucas

- Personnel milestones such as completed probations, academy graduation, and multiple certifications.
- Continued focus on training and development, including academy support, hiring processes, and battalion chief taskbooks.

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- Operational projects included narcotics storage planning (with potential grant funding), testing of new high-rise hose, development of a swimmer program, and exploration of First Due software.
- Grant and equipment updates included GEMT funding efforts and receipt of new SCBA, radios, and related equipment.
- Notable incidents included an elevator rescue, a successful drowning resuscitation with positive patient outcome, and increased winter-related calls at sled hill.
- Mutual aid with South Lake Tahoe continues; boundary drop is not yet in effect, but coordination remains active and effective.

Fire Prevention/Admin – Chief Bryce Cranch

- The focus in Administration and HR is improving employee benefits.
- Recruitment efforts are progressing, with one candidate selected to attend fire academy and expected to join the line in July.
- Seasonal recruitment saw a record 134 applications, with approximately 40 interviews conducted over three days.
- Inspector Rowlett shared photos from event inspections, fire investigations, multi-use building walk through, training done by EOC Tracker, and sprinkler inspections.
- Inspector Rowlett informed the public that he can help draft a letter explaining the importance of visible numbering of residences.
- The Lights on the Lake 4th of July fireworks show was confirmed to be held on a barge on the lake and Glenbrook is also looking into options for a barge fireworks show.

15. Report on Revenue Generation Workshop

Chairman Ben Johnson

Trustee Ward reported progress particularly in the wage comparison committee and the capital facilities and fleet discussions. A clearer direction was established for moving forward, including better identification of ongoing revenue needs. Shared files will now be transitioning to the District drive.

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

Fire Chief Cranch

- One entry-level candidate is being sent to fire academy
- Lateral recruitment closes this week; future interest expected after benefits and pay updates.
- Fire science program is in CTE testing, covering workplace skills and fire science knowledge.

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- Funding was secured for wildland boots for students
- Work is moving forward on UKG benefits and HR system upgrades, including AI tools and automation to reduce manual workload.
- Focus remains on stabilizing the department, improving internal systems, and strengthening relationships with regional partners.

17. Public Comment

Lisa Hokholt reported that the audio quality during the last Board meeting was poor.

18. Confirm next meeting, Wednesday, March 25th, 2026, at 2:30pm, possible agenda items.

Confirmed as scheduled.

19. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM.

Submitted by:

Kathy Donovan

Administrative Assistant/Board Clerk