

TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
May 27, 2026

Those Present:

Interim Fire Chief Bryce Cranch
Chairman Ben Johnson
Trustee John Breaux

Trustee Dan Kruger
Legal Counsel Kara Hayes

1. Call to Order

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

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

Captain Wade led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Chairman Johnson, Trustee Breaux, and Trustee Kruger 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: 3-0

5. Public Comment

None.

6. Trustee Comments

Trustee Breaux recognized Chief Schafer for the work done on the defensible space rebate program.

Trustee Kruger reported that the radio group is moving forward and the meeting synopsis was added to the board book.

Chairman Johnson paused the meeting at 2:37 pm due to technical issues with the virtual meeting platform. The meeting resumed at 2:51 pm. Chairman Johnson provided a brief recap of the meeting and opened Public Comment. No public comments were received.

Trustee Kruger discussed the appropriateness of Douglas County charging Tahoe Douglas Fire the proposed stormwater improvement fee. Chairman Johnson has contacted the County Commissioner regarding the matter and encouraged the Trustees and Chief Cranch to express their concerns and advocate for a fair resolution.

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Chairman Johnson expressed appreciation for Jodie Nelson's attendance at Board meetings and encouraged her to spend time with staff and participate in ride-alongs.

Chairman Johnson thanked the Department for assisting Lake Valley Fire following the loss of one of their firefighters.

7. Approval of the Consent Agenda

- a. Board Meeting Minutes 04/22/2026

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

Second: Trustee Kruger

Motion approved: 3-0

8. Consent items moved forward:

None.

9. Public hearing and possible adoption of the FY 2026-2027 Tentative Budget.

Interim Fire Chief Bryce Cranch

Chief Cranch reported that the tentative budget that was presented at the last board meeting was subsequently approved by the State.

Chief Cranch confirmed the contract list has been updated from the tentative to the final budget to accurately reflect current contracts.

Chief Cranch reported that the budget was balanced through staffing and spending reductions while maintaining the State's minimum reserve requirement. Finance Manager Nolting-Bammer clarified that the budget submitted to the State did not include a deficit.

Chairman Johnson thanked Finance Manager Nolting-Bammer and Chief Cranch for the work completed on the budget.

Trustee Breaux made a motion to adopt the FY 2026-2027 Tentative Budget.

Second: Trustee Kruger

Motion approved: 3-0

10. Public hearing and possible adoption of the FY 2026-2027 Final Budget.

Interim Fire Chief Bryce Cranch

Chief Cranch gave special recognition to Finance Manager Nolting-Bammer, noting her valuable contributions and significant role in the budget process.

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Budget Overview

- Chief Cranch reported that the final budget remains largely unchanged from the tentative budget, with adjustments based on updated expense and revenue information, including confirmed strike team revenue and refined salary and benefit projections.
- The General Fund ending fund balance increased slightly and is projected at approximately 4.29%, meeting the State's minimum reserve requirements.
- Capital spending remains limited, with funding identified for station alerting projects, a reroof project at Station 23, and potential participation in a KGID metal building project. No new apparatus purchases are planned beyond previously approved commitments.

Fund Updates

- **General Fund:** Updated revenue projections, including ad valorem, CTX, interest income, and strike team revenue, resulted in a slight increase to the projected ending fund balance.
- **Sick Leave Reserve Fund:** Minor adjustments were made to salary and wage projections based on updated information, resulting in a slight decrease to the ending fund balance.
- **Special Services Fund:** Minimal changes were made. Finance Manager Nolting-Bammer discontinued the annual transfer from the General Fund, citing an adequate fund balance and the desire to more accurately reflect actual program costs.
- **Fire Safe Community Fund:** Revenue projections improved due to increased contract, fuels management, strike team, and interest income. Operational changes and increased contract work to improve the fund's financial sustainability.
- **Fire Flow Initiative Fund:** Minor adjustments were made, including a reduction in projected capital outlay, resulting in a slightly improved ending fund balance.
- **Aviation Fund:** No significant changes were reported.
- **Health Insurance Fund:** Finance Manager Nolting-Bammer explained that the fund remains in the budget document for audit purposes, although its balance has been transferred to the new Internal Benefits Service Fund.
- **Enterprise (Ambulance) Fund:** Minor revenue and expense adjustments were made. Chief Lucas reported that ambulance billing revenues dropped largely due to insurance reimbursements tied to high-deductible plans. Revenues have since rebounded over the last two months.
- **Health Benefits Internal Service Fund:** Updated projections from the District's health insurance brokers resulted in lower anticipated health insurance cost increases than originally estimated in the tentative budget, improving the outlook.

Chief Cranch recapped that the District faced significant budget challenges due to wage increases, PERS rate increases, higher health insurance costs, and major facility expenses. He noted that the final budget closely reflects the tentative budget, remains approvable, and

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highlighted the importance of future revenue generation to address upcoming capital and personnel costs.

Finance Manager Nolting-Bammer explained that the new Health Insurance Internal Service Fund is budgeted with a negative net change due to the transfer of remaining funds from the previous health insurance fund, providing a reserve that reduces the amount other funds must contribute.

Chief Cranch and Chairman Johnson acknowledged the budget pressures but expressed confidence in working through them while focusing on revenue generation.

Trustee Breaux expressed concern that the new health insurance increase could be closer to 19% rather than the budgeted estimate of 10.2%.

Chief Cranch noted that healthcare costs are variable under self-insurance but said brokers provided strong guidance. HR Specialist Nalder outlined significant costs associated with employee turnover with insurance cited as a contributing factor. Chairman Johnson emphasized that the priority is ensuring employees have reliable access to healthcare.

Trustee Breaux made a motion to adopt the FY 2026-2027 Final Budget.

Second: Trustee Kruger

Motion approved: 3-0

11. Special Recognition

Interim Fire Chief Bryce Cranch

Service Recognition:

| | |
|--|---|
| Captain Brad Petersen | 19 Years of Service |
| Accounting Specialist Lora French | 5 Years of Service |
| Firefighter/Paramedic Will Schultz | 3 Years of Service (Hired as seasonal in 2021) |
| Firefighter/Paramedic Foster Saunders | 3 Years of Service (Hired as seasonal in 2022) |
| Engineer/Squad Leader Clayton Sollberger | 4 Years of Service (Hired as seasonal in 2019) |
| Engineer/Squad Leader Michael Toan | 3 Years of Service (Hired as seasonal in 2022) |
| Engineer/Squad Leader Gunner Wood | 3 Years of Service |

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Engineer/Squad Leader/Operator Matthew Olivares-Laine (Hired as seasonal in 2022)
3 Years of Service
(Hired as seasonal in 2021)

12. District Divisions

Fire Prevention

Fire Inspector Turner shared photos and videos from recent community outreach and training events, including George Whittell High School fire science students participating in interactive wildland fire training and a station tour featuring hands-on activities with the door prop, hose operations, and lunch with firefighters.

Wildland Fire & Fuels – Division Chief Keegan Schafer

- Chief Schafer reported the successful closeout of the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 18 grant following a final review by grant administrators.
- The District continues supporting Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) projects in Zephyr Cove and Upper Kingsbury, providing funding for defensible space and fuels reduction work. Eligible homeowners may receive reimbursement for approved projects, with grant administration provided by the Nevada Tahoe Conservation District.
- Ongoing fuels reduction projects continue throughout the District, including work in Zephyr Cove, Round Hill, and the Tranquility area.
- Schafer provided an update on regional wildfire mitigation efforts through the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team and noted a recent leadership transition within the organization.
- Seasonal restrictions on residential green waste burning are now in effect.
- Community Work Days are starting and residents are encouraged to utilize available chipping, composting, and other community wildfire mitigation programs.
- Chief Monaghan recognized Tyler Black and the Zephyr Crew for raising \$9,000 for the Wildland Firefighter Foundation at the annual Softball Tournament.

Operations – Interim Assistant Chief Steve Prather

- Chief Prather reported that call volume remains typical for the shoulder season, with 133 calls during the reporting period.
- The District assisted with coverage during operational challenges at Lake Valley Fire Protection District, providing personnel and apparatus while receiving support from regional partners to maintain local coverage.
- A new grant-funded narcotics vault has been installed, improving accountability, efficiency, and medication management processes.

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- Station 25 stair replacement plan reviews with the County are ongoing, and the project remains necessary due to the deteriorating condition of the existing stairwell.
- The District successfully completed its first joint Captain promotional examination with Carson City and East Fork Fire Protection Districts. The collaborative process improved efficiency, strengthened regional partnerships, and produced a qualified candidate list. A similar process is planned for Battalion Chief testing later this year.
- Admin staff played a significant role in onboarding and orienting 32 seasonal employees, with the process proceeding smoothly.
- Acting Battalion Chief Norwood continues to take on expanded responsibilities and professional development opportunities, demonstrating strong engagement and leadership growth within the organization.
- An update was provided on ongoing radio communications discussions with Douglas County. Trustee Kruger was recognized for his assistance in advancing solutions and ensuring coordination among stakeholders.

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

Interim Fire Chief Bryce Cranch

- Interim Fire Chief Cranch reported ongoing personnel development activities, including employees completing TAPS, promotional testing, probationary milestones, and acting assignments that support leadership development within the organization.
- Negotiations for the Wildland Fire and Fuels labor contract continue to progress through a collaborative process with all parties.
- Significant staff time has been devoted to budget development and long-term financial planning, including discussions regarding tax base limitations and potential future funding options.
- Work continues on formalizing governance and administration of the Post-Retirement Trust (PRT), including development of trust documents, benefit summaries, and consideration of third-party administration services for the approximately \$18 million fund.
- Staff met with Douglas County Chief Operating Officer Kathy Lewis to review salary surveys, operational efficiencies, and other business-related initiatives.
- The District is transitioning to the Anthem network and Anthem as its third-party administrator (TPA) for employee health benefits. The Chief noted the extensive work involved in the process and anticipated improvements to employee healthcare access and benefits.
- Technology and operational improvements continue, including updates to Google Workspace permissions and implementation of the First Due staffing module

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- Chief Cranch recognized District personnel for their support following the line-of-duty death at Lake Valley Fire Protection District, including engine coverage, peer support, honor guard participation, casket watch, and funeral procession support.
- Staff continue working with Cave Rock General Improvement District regarding a proposed neighborhood access gate, with a focus on maintaining emergency access and evacuation capabilities.
- The District completed its Medicare enrollment renewal process, ensuring continued ability to bill Medicare for services.
- Fire prevention staff continue working with property owners on alternative fire protection measures in areas with limited water supply, while also supporting fire alarm system upgrades and other code compliance projects throughout the District.
- A presentation on emerging firefighting drone technology, including autonomous systems capable of delivering water or foam, as a potential future tool for wildfire response.

14. Public Comment

None.

15. Confirm next meeting, Wednesday, June 24th, 2026, at 2:30pm, possible agenda items.

Confirmed.

16. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:43 PM.

Submitted by:

Kathy Donovan

Administrative Assistant/Board Clerk