

**TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

March 23, 2011
Regular Meeting

Those Present:

Trustee RJ Clason (via phone)	Forester John Pickett
Trustee Brad Dorton	Inspector Eric Guevin
Trustee Ann Grant	Crew Supervisor Keegan Schafer
Trustee Kevin Kjer	Administrative Aid Carrie Nolting
Trustee Steve Seibel	Administrative Assistant Kate Warner
Chief Guy LeFever	
Assistant Chief Van Ogami	
Assistant Chief Mark Novak	
Battalion Chief Ben Sharit	
Battalion Chief Dave Hekhuis	

1. Action Item: *Call to order.*

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm by Trustee Brad Dorton.

2. Action Item: *Pledge of Allegiance.*

Pledge of allegiance was led by Steve Seibel.

3. Action Item: *Roll call.*

Trustee Brad Dorton, Trustee Ann Grant, Trustee Kevin Kjer and Trustee Steve Seibel were all present. Trustee RJ Clason present via telephone.

4. Action Item: *Public comment.*

Kit Bailey, Fire Management Officer, LTBMU presented a plaque from the United States Department of Agriculture stating the following:

“In recognition of the Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District’s invaluable level of hospitality and commitment to inter- agency cooperation in allowing the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, Engine 44 to be stationed at Tahoe Douglas Fire Station #4, Zephyr Cove, NV during the fire season of 2010. The U.S. Forest Service appreciates our partnership.”

Chief LeFever acknowledged the opportunity to engage in this cooperative partnership, and felt that both parties benefited from the 5-person engine company (on Spooner) engaging with us

on alarms. It's been a great experience for everyone to work together and put a face to the voice on the phone.

5. Action Item: Discussion and possible action. Approval of consent calendar.

Item:

- a. Approval of agenda.
- b. Approval of Minutes 02/23/11.
- c. Job Description Fuels Mgmt/Wildland Crew Supervisor.
- d. Job Description Fuels Mgmt/Wildland Crew Foreman.
- e. Job Description Engineer – Revision Page 3.
- f. Personnel Policy – Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace.

Trustee Seibel moved to approve the consent calendar items. Trustee Kjer seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried with a vote of 5-0.

6. Action Item: Consent Items moved forward.

There were none.

7. Presentation: Review and Approval of TDFPD Board of Trustee Code of Ethics Agreement

Trustee Clason made a motion to approve the Code of Ethics as revised. Trustee Grant seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried 5-0.

8. Action Item: Review and Approval of the Tentative Budget

Chief LeFever summarized the tentative budget numbers as they stand today to identify the impact of the revenue reductions, noting that it is a balanced budget and it represents a 10% across the board wage reduction. The Board will not be taking action on the budget at this point, as there are proforma numbers expected next week from the State and he is expecting changes as a result of the Legislature as well. The timeline for approval will actually be the May Board meeting.

Chief LeFever pointed out the following:

Page 1 **Full Time Equivalent Employees** - Tax rate remains the same as last year. Staff has reallocated some Ambulance Funds to the General Fund which just involved moving existing paramedic positions to this fund resulting in a decline from 52-50 positions.

Page 2 **Property Tax Rate and Revenue** - We have lost 90 million in assessed valuation 2 years in a row. Which we haven't seen in years, but he believes we are bottomed out and have reason to be cautiously optimistic.

Page 5 **Ambulance** – See the reallocation to the General Fund.

Pages 6-7 **General Fund Revenues/Expenditures** - Consolidated tax down \$280,000 over last year - General Fund absorbs all this shortage and expenditures have been reduced to match the shortage.

Trustee Clason commented on the Ambulance collection rate continuing to decline, and asked if Staff is comfortable that we have the resources to shift Ambulance resources around, even temporarily? Chief LeFever will address this question later in the discussion.

Page 8 **Capital Projects Fund**- Is funded by Ad Valorem which is a tax override fund that was approved years ago and is identified to be used for equipment/facilities only.

Page 9 **Sick Leave Fund**- Is at the Board’s discretion. It is currently at .01, and needs to be monitored. Annual sick pay incentives and retirement sick payouts come from this fund. Over the past three years, with a lot of retirements, we have used this fund, as it goes down we need to project out a flattening point and replenishing period.

Page 10 **Special Services Fund** - Is for services outside of General Fund (fire), Ambulance Fund, and the Wildfire Community Fund. This includes EOD, HazMat, and rope rescue. The equipment we purchase with grants is moved through this fund. Expenditures in this fund for salaries and wages are for the EOD & HazMat incentives (CBA).

Page 11 **Health Insurance Fund** - Is for the benefits of health insurance for current and retired employees. At this point, we do not show an expenditure for the Trust Fund we are establishing, however this will be added into the final budget.

Page 12 The **Fire Safe Community** - Is funded by the .05 tax override. This fund is unique in that it is outside the abatement. There is a direct impact, when the assessed evaluation drops, we lose appropriately. Other revenue in this fund is from contracts the Zephyr Crew completes and bills, and Strike Team revenue which are dollars we expect to get. If for some reason the revenue is not there, the expenditures will not be there either.

Page 13 **Ambulance Fund** - Chief LeFever returned to the question posed earlier by Trustee Clason...his optimism comes from the fact that this is the first time in 4 years that we have seen an increase in our transports and billings. There is a 6-9 month lag in the billing to payment cycle. Ambulance charts were referenced, showing that TDFPD has experienced 3 years of downward spiral, however the

current year shows an upturn. This budget is predicated on the economy getting better, if it doesn't we will still be able to accomplish the budget goals.

This year completes the Strategic Plan goals to refurbish the rolling inventory of ambulances, with the July deposit of \$35,000 to complete a late fall refurbish of a third ambulance adding to two new ambulances and three new engines. He is confident that this budget can manage between the ad valorem and the user fees to sustain the salaries and wages in it.

Trustee Clason added that through his position on the Barton Memorial Hospital Board, he has seen the impact of the early/heavy snow season which has resulted in an increase usage of services and the corresponding payments at the hospital.

Chief LeFever stressed that paramedic focus on getting patient insurance information into the system quickly and accurately expedites the payment and B/C Sharit carefully monitors this.

Chief LeFever complimented and thanked the Staff for their time and input on the budgeting process.

**9. Action Item: *Review and Approval of Resolution #01-2011 establishing a trust fund per NRS 287.017 to provide post-retirement benefits to retirees*
*Chief Guy LeFever***

This is a work in progress initiative which actually began 8 years ago with the insurance trust which was created to fund benefits for retirees and prompted by the GASB 45 report last year. We dissolved that original trust, and set up a fund with the intent of transferring that money into an irrevocable trust. We are one of the few organizations, along with Truckee Meadows Water Authority to get out in front of this process. With this resolution, we will establish this trust. The resolution defines the trust and process. It includes the requirements for the board members who will serve 2 year terms. The Board will be created with two union members, two management members and our accountant, Bill Johnson whose accounting expertise which is a requirement.

Trustee Clason questioned the previous action item on the tentative budget and asked if it required a vote today. Chief LeFever clarified that was the process in years past, however we do not need to do this any longer as the State process has changed resulting in our tentative budgets no longer being accurate. The true numbers do not come out for another week from the State. This change happened two years ago.

Trustee Seibel asked about the trust timeline. Chief LeFever responded that the attorney, Gus Rossi, estimates 90 days to implement. There were not additional questions.

For the record, Chairman Dorton abstained from the vote as he is a retiree with benefits. Trustee Grant made a motion to approve the resolution as stated. Trustee Kjer seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried 4-0, with 1 abstaining.

10. Item: Review of monthly expenditures.

Chief LeFever presented explanations for the major expenditures:

Comments:

Overpayments - result from the ambulance fund where the patient has paid the bill and then their insurance company paid as well.

Date	Check #	Payee	Amount	Fund	Reason
02/21/2011	52056	Accent	\$279	Ambulance	Overpayment Refund
02/21/2011	52061	Benildo I Plande	\$300	Ambulance	Overpayment Refund
02/21/2011	52068	John Pickett	\$5,660	Fire Safe	Contract Forester-should be last
03/02/2011	52083	American Truck & Trailer Body	\$3955	Fire Safe	Chip Truck Re-chassis
03/02/2011	52094	George Echan	\$2660	General	Legal Fees-Ruvo & General
03/02/2011	52095	John Pickett	\$533	Health Insurance	Reimbursement-Feb health insurance per contract
03/02/2011	52096	Justin Rossi	\$104	General	Reimbursement-Dr. visit
03/02/2011	52110	TRPA	\$777	Fire Safe	Use Permit Zephyr Site
03/08/2011	52126	Midkiff & Associates	\$1573.34	Fire Safe	TRPA Consulting
03/08/2011	52129	North Tahoe Fire	\$1000	Fire Safe	Legal Fees-LTRFCA
03/08/2011	52141	Superior Collision Center	\$1278.86	Fire Safe	Crew vehicle repair-non insurance
03/15/2011	52147	Kristina Vierra Benefit	\$100	General	College fund donation-In memory of Squaw Valley Firefighter
03/15/2011	52152	Superior Collision Center	\$10,176.26	Fire Safe	Damage-Reimbursed by insurance

Pickett – last check for independent contractor services, prior to becoming an employee on 01/31/11.

Pickett – this employee is not on the TDFPD insurance plan, payment is for reimbursement for him insurance premium, as per his employment contract. We will make checks in the future directly to his insurance carrier once a month.

Rossi – last year in CBA negotiations, management agreed to pay for DR visit expenses required to return to work after sick calls.

North Tahoe Fire – the Regional Chiefs in the basin joined to submit an amicus brief. Chief Novak expanded that as a result of the Governor’s Bi-State Rule Ribbon Committee recommendations, TRPA and Lahontan Water Quality Boards were going to streamline the permit process with fuels management projects. The MOU to do that has been challenged legally in court, so the Chief’s have filed this brief to provide information that was relative to that case. If the recommendation is successfully blocked, it will make it harder for us implement our fuels management projects, and take us back to a pre-Angora state.

Chairperson Dorton asked who was challenging the recommendation. Forester Pickett responded that it was the Sierra Forest Legacy, and the Tahoe area Sierra Club.

The expense here is directly associated with the fees to file that one document, and this is TDFPD’s portion.

11. Discussion: *Fire Chief’s report on previous month’s activities.*

Service Recognition

FF-P Chris Kynett	7 Years of Service
Engineer Bryce Cranch	7 Years of Service
Engineer Chris Lucas	7 Years of Service
Engineer Chris Peterson	6 Years of Service

Alarms for January 2011

Total – 183.

Ruvo Gate

We had a very successful meeting with the homeowner’s associations. Attorney George Echan did an excellent job communicating the TDFPD’s position on the issue.

Trustee Grant asked for clarification on the homeowner’s concern. Chief LeFever stated that the association does not want Ruvo to block off access which has been readily available to them. They were concerned that TDFPD had approved closure of what they believed to be one of their evacuation routes. They were assured that was not the case, and that public safety is always our number one priority, but the rights of the homeowner also have to be considered. Approval included the appropriate safeguards to protect the community and in fact, TDFPD has gone farther than ever before to ensure access. There is a list of items that we are still working with Ruvo’s attorney to complete this, and that is a condition of operation. They cannot operate the gate until all the conditions have been met.

Health Insurance Trust Development

Chief LeFever updated the Board that since this report was issued, he had an opportunity to redeem one CD, and purchase 3 - \$100,000 CDs @ 2-3% interest rates. As previously noted, we remain liquid to be move funds into the irrevocable trust investment pool.

Trustee Seibel asked about the casinos hiring Fire Protection Engineers. A/C Novak responded that in our inspections, we offer this as an alternative to the casino operators if they do not agree with our requirements.

Trustee Grant asked if they did not comply, would we have restricted the use of Mont Bleu's showroom. A/C Novak expanded that we had placed conditions on the use, such as a recalculated occupancy load, which is consistent with fire code. And other conditions for certain shows, that would cause the casino to increase their costs. The District was getting into a situation where we were providing a lot of additional staff to monitor those types of events (standing room only), and we need the casino to be able to operate the room safely with only occasional monitoring by TDFPD. The FP Engineer will study the situation and find ways to allow them to safely increase their occupancy load, so they will reduce their expenses in the long run.

Chairperson Dorton asked about the mutual aid support given on a Dayton fire which was a long way for a TDFPD engine to travel. B/C Hekhuis was on duty that day, and said the call was requested due to wind conditions and short staffing in Dayton for a house fire, Carson City Fire and East Fork Fire also provided back up. By the time we arrived, it was just over-haul work.

Action Item #12: Closed Session Contract Negotiations (2011 – 2012 Contract)

A motion was made by Trustee Grant to go to the Closed Session (Contract Negotiations) and Trustee Kjer seconded the motion. No discussion, motion carried 5-0 @ 4:50 pm.

A motion was made by Trustee Grant to resume the Open Meeting and Trustee Seibel seconded the motion. No discussion, motion carried 5-0.

Chairperson Dorton resumed the Open Session at 5:23 pm.

Action Item #13: Confirm next meeting, April 27, 2011, @ 4:00 pm, possible agenda items.

Agenda items were discussed:

- Board 10% reduction
- AMB rate increase for standby and mileage
- Closed Session (contract negotiations)

A motion was made by Trustee Clason to confirm the next meeting as scheduled. Trustee Grant seconded their motion. No discussion, motion carried 5-0.

Action Item #15: Adjourn.

A motion was made by Trustee Clason to adjourn, and seconded by Trustee Grant. No discussion, motion carried 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 pm.

This meeting was recorded on audio tape.

Kate Warner
Administrative Assistant
Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District