

NORTH TAHOE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Board of Directors

Regular Meeting

NTPFD Station 51 Public Safety Center
222 Fairway Drive, Tahoe City, California

Tuesday

January 26, 2021 – 4:30 p.m.

MINUTES – CORRECTED – APPROVED 03-23-2021

NOTE: This meeting was held virtually as permitted by the Governor’s Executive Order regarding COVID-19.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by President Baffone.

Roll Call

Attending:

Board Present (via GoToMeeting)

Directors Baffone, Correa, Doyle, Loverde, and Ragan. A quorum was established.

Staff Present (via GoToMeeting)

Fire Chief Mike Schwartz

Legal Counsel Steve Gross

Assistant Chief Steve Leighton

Division Chief Steve McNamara

Director of Finance and Administration Kim Eason

Battalion Chief Alan Whisler

Battalion Chief Scott Sedgwick

Battalion Chief Sarah Lagano

Captain Brent Armstrong

Firefighter Will Marshman

Station 67 – Captain Jamie Sheppard and Firefighter Jeff Rau

Station 53 – Captain Paul Moen and Engineer Julien Lecorps

Forest Fuels Coordinator Eric Horntvedt

Public Information Officer Erin Holland

Inspector Ramon Manzano

Mechanic II/III Joe Parle

Administrative Assistant I/Clerk of the Board Kelly McElravey

Public (via GoToMeeting)

Ellie Beals

Jennifer Lemke

Joe Mueller, General Manager, ASCWD

Kendall Galka, McClintock’s Accountancy

Jaime Gignoux, McClintock’s Accountancy

2. Administer Oath of Office to Board Members (Baffone, Correa, and Loverde)

The District Clerk administered the oath of office to Board Members Baffone, Correa, and Loverde. The Directors then signed their oaths.

President Baffone asked and paused for public comment since there were 22 people on the virtual meeting. There was no public comment.

3. Board Officer elections and committee assignments

Each January, the Board elects officers and decides who will serve on certain District committees for the year.

President Baffone asked and paused for public comment since there were 22 people on the virtual meeting. There was no public comment. There was a Q&A session between Board and staff.

Upon motion by Director Doyle, seconded by Director Ragan, to have the slate and committee structure for NTFFPD remain as presented in the agenda. Director Baffone to continue serving as President, Director Ragan to continue serving as Vice President, and Director Doyle was elected to continue serving as Treasurer. The committees also remained the same, as follows:

- Finance & Budget – Directors Baffone (Chair) and Doyle*
- Negotiations: Directors Correa (Chair) and Ragan*
- Building/Construction: Directors Loverde, and Ragan (Chair)*
- Rules & Regulations: Directors Baffone and Doyle (Chair)*
- Ad Hoc Personnel Committee: Directors Baffone and Loverde (Chair)*

A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

- Ayes: Directors Baffone, Correa, Doyle, Loverde, Ragan*
- Noes: None*
- Abstain: None*
- Absent: None*

4. Additions to Agenda/Approval of Agenda

There were no changes, and the agenda was approved as presented. No public comment.

5. Pledge of Allegiance

6. Public Comment

Chief Whisler introduced the three new Firefighters (Nick Bisagno, Kate Butler, and Taran Madison) to the Board. President Baffone asked and paused for public comment. There was no comment from the public. The Board welcomed the new Firefighters to the District.

7. Correspondence

President Baffone went over the thank you notes received since the last Board meeting. He also acknowledged the good work of PIO Holland and Inspector Manzano for educating the communities of Alpine Peaks and Chamberlands so they could attain the Firewise Community status. Now we have six communities who have met the criteria: He then asked for public comment. There was no public comment or Board comment.

8. Public hearing regarding Ordinance 01-2021 setting fees for cost recovery of Fire & Life Safety activities

The public hearing was opened at 4:46 p.m.

Chief McNamara reminded the Board that this Ordinance is the same as was presented last month, and it also includes adding a service fee to account for credit card transactions and additional services not previously captured for revenue. It also adjusts some of the charges based on the time required to complete these services.

President Baffone asked and paused for public comment since there were 23 people on the virtual meeting. There was no public comment.

The public hearing was closed at 4:50 p.m.

Upon motion by Director Correa, seconded by Director Loverde, the Board waived the second reading and adopted Ordinance 01-2021. A roll call vote. The vote was five in favor:

*Ayes: Directors Baffone, Correa, Doyle, Loverde, Ragan
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None*

9. Presentation by Independent Auditors and Acceptance of the 2019-2020 Annual Audit

Kendall Galka presented the audit report. Jaime Gignoux was the manager overseeing the audit from McClintock's Accountancy. The auditors reported an unmodified or clean opinion on the financial statements, which means the documents provided in the packet are true and without misstatements. There were no material findings again this year. There were also no audit adjustments needed which is very rare. The report is 50 pages long. The auditors will meet with President Baffone and Treasurer Doyle at a later date to go over the report in more detail. NTFPD's records are done on a modified accrual basis. The first 15 pages are the most meaningful. Kendall mentioned that there were significant estimates and disclosures (i.e., depreciation, pension liability, and post-employment health obligations to name a few). The District has managed to clear all Other Matters listed from prior years with only two remaining in the current year related to Segregation of Duties and the development of a comprehensive Accounting Manual. Kendall stated that with a District this size, there will almost always be

issues with segregation of duties and the District has instituted many checks and balances that will alleviate the risk, but it still needs to be noted.

The Board commended Director Eason and her team for the impeccable records.

Upon motion by Director Ragan, seconded by Director Baffone, the Board accepted the 2019-2020 annual audit as presented by McClintock's Accountancy. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

*Ayes: Directors Baffone, Correa, Doyle, Loverde, Ragan
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None*

10. Consider Resolution No. 1-2021 authorizing the Assistant Chief to carry on duties of the Fire Chief while he is on leave

Fire Chief Mike Schwartz presented this Resolution. He is planning to retire in 2021 and intends to use accumulated vacation leave throughout the year. Assistant Chief Steve Leighton has been working with Chief Schwartz for a smooth transition and Chief Schwartz stated Chief Leighton is capable of handling the Fire Chief's duties while he is on leave.

Because of the extended periods of time that Chief Schwartz will be away from the office, it is recommended that Assistant Chief Leighton be authorized to continue the duties of the Fire Chief while he is on leave. This will also allow daily District business to be performed without delay. Resolution 1-2021 states "Chief Leighton shall serve as the Acting Fire Chief and be vested with full power and authority of the Fire Chief".

President Baffone asked and paused for public comment since there were 21 people on the virtual meeting. There was no public comment.

Upon motion by Director Correa, seconded by Director Loverde, the Board adopted Resolution 1-2021 authorizing the Assistant Chief to carry on the duties of the Fire Chief while he is on leave. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

*Ayes: Directors Baffone, Correa, Doyle, Loverde, Ragan
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None*

11. Consider Resolution No. 2-2021 approving a contract with I-Bank to refinance Station 51 without encumbering the other stations and authorizing the Fire Chief or his designee to enter into that contract on behalf of the District

Chief Leighton reminded the Board that North Tahoe Fire Protection District is currently in a lease agreement with I-Bank for Station 51 that lists the other stations as collateral. This new refinancing contract eliminates the other stations as collateral.

Division Chief Steve McNamara, Director Eason, and Administrative Assistant I Blanca Lundin have been working with I-Bank for over six months to finalize this agreement, and it has been reviewed and approved by legal counsel.

President Baffone asked and paused for public comment since there were 21 people on the virtual meeting. There was no public comment. There was a Q&A session between Board and staff.

Upon motion by Director Ragan, seconded by Director Loverde, the Board adopted Resolution 2-2021 approving a contract with I-Bank to refinance Station 51 without encumbering the other stations and authorizing the Fire Chief or his designee to enter into that contract on behalf of the District. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

*Ayes: Directors Baffone, Correa, Doyle, Loverde, Ragan
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None*

12. Consider Resolution No. 3-2021 in appreciation of Curtis Mulkey and Resolution No. 4-2021 in appreciation of Mike Hacker

Chief Leighton said these Resolutions would reflect our gratitude for Captain Mulkey's and Captain Hacker's many years of service to the District and the community, and the District requests the Board adopt the Resolutions in Appreciation for each of them.

President Baffone asked and paused for public comment since there were 21 people on the virtual meeting. There was no public comment. The Board and staff had many accolades regarding the retiring Captains.

Upon motion by Director Doyle, seconded by Director Ragan, the Board adopted Resolution 3-2021 in appreciation of Curtis Mulkey and Resolution No. 4-2021 in appreciation of Mike Hacker. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

*Ayes: Directors Baffone, Correa, Doyle, Loverde, Ragan
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None*

13. Response to our first full year of STR/VHR inspections in Placer and El Dorado Counties

Chief Leighton introduced Inspector Ramon Manzano. Chief Schwartz felt strongly about this program. Last year, the Board approved an MOU with the County to perform the inspections. The Inspector's salary is paid from cost recovery fees. Inspector Manzano gave a brief presentation regarding the first full year of inspections he conducted in Placer and El Dorado Counties regarding short-term rentals and vacation home rentals. His report included the following information:

- The number of inspections completed in 2020 for both Placer and El Dorado: There are currently 3500 permits issued in Placer County and 750 in El Dorado County. Of those, 1607 inspections have been completed in Placer County, and 158 have been completed in El Dorado County.
- Document regarding the inspection section process: We use CalFIRE's LE100 form.
- Projections for 2021: To complete 450 inspections for Placer and 400 for El Dorado.
- Any potential upcoming issues: 1) last minute/non-compliant homeowners waiting until the 2023 deadline to schedule their inspections; and 2) impacts due to COVID-19.
- How the STR/VHR addresses correlate to our call volume, including the total calls for service that occurred at STR/VHR addresses and the % of our call volume that occurred at STR/VHR: 7.58% of total EMS/Fire calls were for STR/VHR properties (187 out of 2,467 in 2020).

President Baffone asked and paused for public comment since there were 21 people on the virtual meeting. There was no public comment. There was a Q&A session between Board and staff.

14. Promotions, special consideration, concurrence with the Fire Chief for permanent appointments

Chief Leighton explained that promotional procedures are contained in the District's Rules and Regulations (Sections 6 Hiring and Promotions, Section 7 Examinations, and Section 10 Appointments). These three sections, together, provide the Fire Chief the processes and procedures to complete promotional examination and appoint personnel to vacant positions as appropriate.

The Fire Chief may, with concurrence of the Board of Directors, make a finding that deviating from Sections 6 and 7 for special circumstances may be in the best interest of the District. In this event, the Fire Chief may hire an individual without the need to comply with the above process. Under no circumstances, may the Fire Chief appoint an individual who lacks the minimum qualifications for the position.

The Fire Chief, with concurrence of the Board of Directors, makes the following findings:

In addition to the special circumstances of the world's worst pandemic, all three Provisional Appointees are:

- fully qualified;
- currently working in those positions; and
- are not on probation or are anticipated to successfully complete probation.

There are NO current promotional eligibility lists for the positions, and the District has not identified any additional qualified personnel interest in testing for these positions.

Fire Chief Schwartz requests the Board approve the permanent appointment of Division Chief Steven McNamara, Battalion Chief Scott Sedgwick, and Battalion Chief Sarah Lagano and acknowledge that their promotional appointment dates will remain the same as their initial Provisional Promotional dates.

President Baffone asked and paused for public comment since there were 20 people on the virtual meeting. There was no public comment. There was a Q&A session between Board and staff.

Upon motion for concurrence with the Fire Chief's findings and recommendations was made by Director Correa, seconded by Director Ragan, the Board approved the permanent appointments of Division Chief Steven McNamara, Battalion Chief Scott Sedgwick and Battalion Chief Sarah Lagano be made this 26th Day of January 2021 and approved their promotional appointment dates will remain the same as their initial Provisional Promotional dates. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

*Ayes: Directors Baffone, Correa, Doyle, Loverde, Ragan
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None*

15. Consider authorizing the Fire Chief or his designee to enter into on behalf of the District the Agreement for Fire Protection and Related Services by NTFPD to ASCWD

Chief Leighton introduced Joe Mueller, the new General Manager for ASCWD. He reminded the Board that North Tahoe Fire has been providing fire, emergency medical, and related services to the Alpine Springs County Water District ("ASCWD") for many years. He pointed out the only item added to this contract was Item 10 on page 11 of the Agreement which is a clause that allows ASCWD to review, evaluate the Fire Chief and related services and provide a report to the NTFPD. The contract will be for 15 years, expiring on 12/31/2036. He thanked Director Eason and Mike Dobrowski (CPA for ASCWD) for working together to finalize the financial aspects of the Agreement. ASCWD will pay 80% of property taxes per year to NTFPD for providing fire and EMS services. The Agreement included in the Board packet was approved by the Board of Directors of ASCWD at their meeting on January 8, 2021.

Upon motion by Director Doyle, seconded by Director Ragan, the Board authorized the Fire Chief or his designee to sign on behalf of the District the Agreement for Fire Protection, Emergency Medical and Related Services with Alpine Springs County Water District. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

*Ayes: Directors Baffone, Correa, Doyle, Loverde, Ragan
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None*

16. Finance Report

- 16.1 Purchases Journal
- 16.2 Breakdown of CalCard purchases
- 16.3 Gross payroll totals
- 16.4 Account Detail Report

Administrative Report

Director Eason reported that the Administrative Division remained busy in November and December. We continued working on the 2019/2020 audit that is being presented at the Board meeting this evening. The 2017/2018 Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) audit is still underway, and we hope to finalize it soon. The District was able to close out multiple grants over the last few months. We were informed that we fulfilled all performance, financial and administrative requirements for the 2016 FEMA AFG for Thermal Imaging Cameras, the 2017 FEMA AFG for Extrication Equipment, and the 2018 Message Board grant. The District was also notified by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) that they have completed the final calculation of the 2017/2018 Intergovernmental Transfer (IGT) program and no additional funding will be required. Finally, she reminded all Form 700 filers that their forms must be completed by April 1, 2021 to avoid a penalty. This can be done online on the Placer County website (<https://edisclosure.placerelections.com/>).

The 1099s were mailed yesterday. The first allocation of property taxes (\$6.2 million) was received in December.

There was a Q&A session between Board and staff. President Baffone asked and paused for public comment on the virtual meeting. There was no public comment. There was a Q&A between Board and staff.

Upon motion by Director Ragan, seconded by Director Loverde, the Board approved the finance report dated January 26, 2021, purchases journals for November and December 2020, breakdown of CalCard purchases listed on the September-October and November 2020 statements, and the payroll report for November and December 2020, and the account detail for November and December 2020, as presented. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

*Ayes: Directors Baffone, Correa, Doyle, Loverde, Ragan
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None*

17. Staff Reports

- 17.1 Assistant Chief
- 17.2 Fire & Life Safety / Facilities / Forest Fuels / PIO
- 17.3 Emergency Medical Services
- 17.4 Safety & Logistics
- 17.5 Training & Technical Rescue

Staff reports were reviewed and no action was taken.

There was no public comment. There was a Q&A session between Board and staff.

18. Approval of Minutes from the regular Board meeting held December 1, 2020.

No changes or corrections were requested from the Board or the public.

President Baffone asked and paused for public comment since there were 21 people on the virtual meeting. There was no public comment.

Upon motion by Director Correa, seconded by Director Ragan, the Board approved the Minutes from the Regular Board meeting held December 1, 2020. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

Ayes: Directors Baffone, Correa, Doyle, Loverde, Ragan

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

15. Next Board Meeting and Other Important Dates

- *February 23, 2021*
- *March 23, 2021*
- *April 27, 2021*
- *May, 2021 Awards Ceremony – postponed until after COVID*

President Baffone asked and paused for public comment since there were 21 people on the virtual meeting. There was no public comment.

16. Board Comments/Information Items.

President Baffone asked for any additions to the agenda next month. There were none.

President Baffone asked and paused for public comment since there were 21 people on the virtual meeting. There was no public comment.

17. Adjournment. *The meeting was adjourned by President Baffone at 6:38 p.m.*