

NORTH TAHOE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
NTFPD Station 51 Public Safety Center
222 Fairway Drive
Tahoe City, California

Tuesday
September 26, 2023 – 3:30 p.m.

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order** - *The meeting was called to order at 3:36 p.m. by President Baffone.*

Roll Call

Attending:

Board Present

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

Staff Present

Fire Chief Steve Leighton

Division Chief Alan Whisler

Fire Marshal Brent Armstrong

Battalion Chief Naman Beatie

Battalion Chief Jamie Sheppard

Captain Nikki Wagner (gone at 3:45 p.m.)

Captain Jeremiah Meadows (gone at 3:45 p.m.)

Engineer Jason Boyd (gone at 3:45 p.m.)

Engineer Jeff Rau (gone at 3:45 p.m.)

Firefighter Brian Hansen (gone at 3:45 p.m.)

Forest Fuels Manager April Shackelford

Administrative Assistant II/PIO Erin Holland

Administrative Assistant II Gordana Wood (gone at 3:45 p.m.)

Administrative Assistant II Blanca Lundin (gone at 3:45 p.m.)

Administrative Assistant II/Clerk of the Board Melissa Daniels

Public

CAL FIRE Battalion Chief Thomas Smith (gone at 3:45 p.m.)

Battalion Chief Jamie Sheppard's wife and children (gone at 3:45 p.m.)

Before the meeting began, Chief Leighton addressed the Board and staff and offered Captain Jamie Sheppard the position of provisional Battalion Chief effective immediately. Chief Sheppard accepted his new position and will be taking command of C-Shift. Chief Sheppard was

officially pinned by his wife and children. President Baffone then presented the Battalion Chief Shield to Chief Sheppard.

2. Additions to Agenda/Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented. There was no public comment.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Public Comment – no public comment.

5. Approval of Minutes from the regular Board meeting held June 27, 2023

No change was requested from the Board. There was no comment from the public.

Upon motion by Director Loverde, seconded by Director Ragan, the Board approved the Minutes from the Regular Board meeting held June 27, 2023. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was four in favor:

Ayes: Directors Baffone, Correa, Loverde, and Ragan

Noes: None

Abstain: Director Doyle

Absent: None

6. Correspondence

President Baffone went over the thank you notes received since the last Board meeting.

7. Consider Resolution 13-2023 accepting the FY 2022 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) award (#EMW-2022-FG-07717) Grant from FEMA for Extrication Equipment (\$21,335.71 Federal Share, \$1,066.79 District Share) for a project total of \$22,402.50

Chief Leighton presented this item to the Board. Pursuant to the 2022 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Award No. EMW-2022-FG-07717, North Tahoe Fire Protection District will purchase three (3) Maxiforce Air Lifting Bag Master Control Kits and three (3) sets of air lifting bags.

As a result of this, staff is asking the Board to adopt Resolution 13-2023, accepting the federal award amount of \$21,335.71 as listed in FEMA FY2022 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) award (Award No. EMW-2022-FG-07717), and to authorize the Fire Chief to approve the purchase of the extrication equipment. In order to receive the grant award, the District must agree to match five percent of the total award (\$1,066.79).

Battalion Chief Naman Beatie showed the Board an example of what the new air lifting bags look like and how they are used. These are big-ticket items for the District. Chief Whisler

commented that there have been four or five incidents over the last seven years where these tools have been used.

Chief Leighton thanked Erin and Kim for their hard work and attention to detail on this item.

There was a discussion between Board and staff. There was no public comment.

Upon motion by Director Ragan, seconded by Director Loverde, to the Board accepted the grant award of \$22,402.50, agree to match five percent of the grant in the amount of \$1,066.70 as described in the Grant Agreement, retroactively authorized the Fire Chief to enter into (on behalf of the North Tahoe Fire Protection District) any agreement and amendments regarding the FEMA FY2022 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) award (Award No. EMW-2022-FG-07717) and approved associated purchases on behalf on the North Tahoe Fire Protection District, and adopted Resolution 13-2023. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

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

8. Consider Resolution 14-2023 accepting the California Tahoe Conservancy Carnelian Canyon Fuel Hazard Reduction Project (Grant Agreement No. CTA23011L) from the California Tahoe Conservancy for the implementation of the Carnelian Canyon Fuel Hazard Reduction Project in the amount of \$197,340

Chief Armstrong and Forest Fuels Manager April Shackelford presented this item to the Board. Chief Armstrong stated that the Board saw this in similar language last year. April put together a package to treat 78 acres in Carnelian Woods in Carnelian Bay. This is phase two of that project. He commended April for putting this together and is a testament to getting vegetation off the ground and out of the basin. This new project is a new source of funding to get the project completed.

Under this Agreement, the North Tahoe Fire Protection District (Grantee) will reduce hazardous fuels using pile-burning and/or chipping on 78 acres of private and local government-owned land. The fuel hazard reduction treatments funded by this grant are limited to the reduction of hazardous fuels and conifer density by pile-burning and/or chipping activities. Grantee shall determine the appropriate fuel reduction method on any given parcel.

All areas treated using funding from this grant are within the threat or defense zone of the wildland-urban interface, near the community of Carnelian Bay in Placer County. Areas within the threat or defense zone of the wildland-urban interface are among the highest priorities identified in the Lake Tahoe Basin Community Wildfire Protection Plan and the Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy.

These treatments have been endorsed through the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team, a partnership of Basin fire agencies, land managers, and regulators. These treatments will also improve forest health and reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire.

Director Doyle asked once we are done with the Carnelian Bay project, what is the next focus? April responded that she is getting ready to put together the Round 18 project. The first priority on that project is going to be the hill slope between the Chinquapin HOA and Dollar Point, which are both Firewise communities. The hill slope is part of the Dollar Creek Canyon. Chief Leighton added that our ultimate goal is to build as many shaded fuel breaks around the basin as we can. There is an opportunity with Caltrans to discuss a project to build fuel breaks along the evacuation corridors in the basin, as well.

There was a discussion between Board and staff. There was no public comment.

Upon motion by Director Ragan, seconded by Director Doyle, to the Board accepted grant award of \$197,340, authorized the Fire Chief to enter into (on behalf of the North Tahoe Fire Protection District) any agreement and amendments regarding the California Tahoe Conservancy Grant Agreement CTA23011L, and adopted Resolution 14-2023 A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

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

Public Hearing was opened at 4:01 p.m.

9. [Public hearing on the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2023/2024 and Appropriations Limit for Fiscal Year 2023/2024](#)

a) Consider Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2023/2024

The Fire District is required to adopt a final budget prior to October 1 of each year. The District has been operating under the spending authority of a preliminary budget since July 1.

The District used the priority-driven budget process to create the budget document presented at this meeting. As part of this process, employees from all levels of the District participated in generating this budget. Once the draft was created, the Fire Chief and Director of Finance met with the Chief Officers to review all expenditure requests to determine which requests would be included in the final budget presented at this meeting.

District staff believes, given the information available, the budget as presented will ensure the District's ability to remain financially solvent now and in the future.

Director of Finance and Administration Kim Eason gave the Board some highlights from this year's final budget:

- We have a balanced budget for the fiscal year for our final budget;
- We have budgeted \$100,000 being put into reserves;
- We have accounted for salary increases, PERS increases, benefit increases, and a few capital purchases such as the Rescue Rig (paid for by a grant), the Chevy Tahoe, and modifications to Station 51 for more office space.

There was a discussion between Board and staff. There was no public comment.

b) Consider Resolution 15-2023 adopting the Appropriations Limit for Fiscal Year 2023/2024

Public Hearing was closed at 4:15 p.m.

Upon motion by Director Doyle, seconded by Director Baffone, the Board adopted the North Tahoe Fire Protection District FY 2023/2024 Final Budget in the amount of \$20,911,653, and adopted Resolution 15-2023 setting the Appropriations Limit for fiscal year 2023-2024. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

<i>Ayes:</i>	<i>Directors Baffone, Correa, Doyle, Loverde and Ragan</i>
<i>Noes:</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Abstain:</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Absent:</i>	<i>None</i>

10. Consider accepting donations from NTPFA for 20 Tempur-Pedic Long Mattresses

Chief Whisler presented this item to the Board. The mattresses in the stations around the District were old and were in need of replacement. Firefighter Doe contacted Tempur-Pedic and received a free donation of 20 new beds to the North Tahoe Professional Firefighters Association (“NTPFA”). NTPFA has offered to donate to the North Tahoe Fire Protection District 20 Tempur-Pedic twin long mattresses. This donation will replace the districts’ existing mattress inventory in all the stations.

Director Doyle applauded the initiative, resourcefulness, and teamwork in receiving this donation.

There was a discussion between Board and staff. There was no public comment.

Upon motion by Director Doyle, seconded by Director Ragan, the Board accepted the donations of 20 Tempur-Pedic Twin Long Mattresses from the NTPFA. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

<i>Ayes:</i>	<i>Directors Baffone, Correa, Doyle, Loverde, and Ragan</i>
<i>Noes:</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Abstain:</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Absent:</i>	<i>None</i>

11. Request to modify Rules and Regulations to update the Director of Finance and Administration & Administrative Manager job descriptions

Director of Finance and Administration Kim Eason presented this item. Since the retirement of Meeks Bay Fire Protection District’s last employee in November 2021, the North Tahoe Administrative Department has been operating with one less FTE (full-time equivalent) while absorbing all the administrative duties of MBFPD. During this time, the administrative duties of the District have grown substantially, as well as the need to develop succession planning. The Administrative Manager position will fill both of these needs for the District. Upon review of the job descriptions for the Director of Finance and Administration and the Administrative Manager, it was noticed that some updates and corrections needed to be made. The Director of Finance and Administration job description only has a few minor corrections and clerical errors from the original job description that was approved in 2017. The Administrative Manager job description was rewritten and modified to reflect the current needs of the District.

There was a discussion between Board and staff. There was no public comment.

Upon motion by Director Ragan, seconded by Director Correa, the Board amended the District’s Rules and Regulations Appendix A to include the updated Director of Finance and Administration and Administrative Manager job descriptions. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

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

12. Future planning with Meeks Bay Fire

Chief Leighton updated the Board on this item. On June 1st there was a Zoom meeting with President Baffone, Vice President Ragan, Chief Leighton, Chief Armstrong, Director Eason, Placer LAFCO’s Executive Officer Michelle McIntyre, El Dorado County District 5 Supervisor Brooke Laine, El Dorado County Executive Office representatives Tiffany Schmid and Sue Hennike, and Placer County Executive Officer representatives Jane Christenson and Shawna Purvines. The topic of discussion at this meeting was to get going on the annexation process and where do we go from here. Two months went by after this meeting and the staff had not heard anything from El Dorado County, Placer County, or Placer LAFCO. Chief Leighton had mentioned this at a Meeks Bay Board meeting and the Board decided to write letters to the members of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors asking why the annexation process was being delayed. These letters resulted in a meeting at Station 51 with Chief Leighton, Director Eason, Vice President Ragan, Meeks Bay Board President Ed Miller, and the key players from El Dorado County such as Tiffany Schmid, Sue Hennike, and Brooke Laine to discuss a path moving forward. The main issue is how El Dorado County is going to pay off the Meeks Bay

Fire UAL. Placer County stated that is not their responsibility to pay another county's debt, and Placer LAFCO stated they will not approve the project if either parties are hurt in the process.

Two weeks ago, Chief Leighton received a letter from Placer LAFCO stating that their Board will be going to vote to close our LAFCO case at their next Board meeting on September 8th. Placer LAFCO has a policy where if there is not substantial movement on a project within a year the Placer LAFCO Board has the ability to close a case and move on to the next project, and our project has been at the top of the priority list for two years with little movement from El Dorado County. Upon receiving this letter from Placer LAFCO, Chief Leighton contacted Placer LAFCO Board President Cindy Gustafson and expressed to her that progress is being made. Chief Leighton and El Dorado County's Assistant CAO Sue Hennike also asked to see if Placer LAFCO would consider postponing the closing of the case. On September 8th, Chief Leighton drove down to Auburn for the Placer LAFCO Board meeting, and he was supposed to meet El Dorado County staff there. Chief Leighton was the only one to show up in person to the Board meeting. At this meeting, the LAFCO Board agreed to postpone the closing of the case until April 1, 2024. This means that all parties involved will need to conclude this process by that date.

On September 20th, Meeks Bay Fire Board President Miller forwarded an email to Chief Leighton that he received from El Dorado County staff writing that they wanted to meet privately with the Meeks Bay Fire Board of Directors and did not want Chief Leighton to be part of that meeting. What needs to happen is El Dorado County and the Meeks Bay Fire Board of Directors need to discuss and agree on a resolution of how to move this process forward. They then need to take their resolution to the Placer County Board of Supervisors who will need to approve the resolution, then Placer LAFCO will have to agree that neither party is harmed, and lastly the North Tahoe Fire Board of Directors need to vote on the resolution. This morning, Sue Hennike called Chief Leighton who said that there had been a misunderstanding and that they were not trying to eliminate him from coming to the meeting, but they wanted to meet with the Meeks Bay Fire Board privately to see where their thoughts on the process are. So, El Dorado County staff and two members of the Meeks Bay Fire Board will be meeting on October 2nd down at Station 67 at 12:00 p.m.

Director Loverde stated that his patience is running thin with this process with El Dorado County and Meeks Bay Fire and that it is crazy that this has been going on for so long. He continued by saying that we know that El Dorado County needs to come to the table for the \$2.5 million UAL, it is as simple as that. He continued that he would not have given an extension as this has become unreasonably long. He believes that if El Dorado County and the Meeks Bay Board members do not come up with something in the next 30 to 60 days it is time to go.

President Baffone agreed to the idea of giving them until January to present something to the North Tahoe Fire Board and if they do not meet that deadline then the annexation process is off the table. This will be the last extension that the Meeks Bay Fire Board will get. President Baffone believes that the meeting between El Dorado County staff and the two Meeks Bay Fire Board members is a good thing because the North Tahoe Fire Board and staff have done everything they can at this point for the annexation process. It is now on their plate to do something with.

Chief Leighton stated that North Tahoe Fire will continue to provide excellent Fire and EMS services to our residents and visitors while we continue to work through the annexation process.

This item was for informational purposes. No Board action was required, but there was a discussion between Board and staff. There was no public comment.

13. [Finance Report – June 2023 and July-August 2023](#)

- 13.1 [Purchases Journals](#)
- 13.2 [Breakdown of CalCard purchases](#)
- 13.3 [Gross payroll totals](#)
- 13.4 [Account Detail Reports](#)

Finance and Administration Director Kim Eason presented this item. Director Doyle commented that it sounds like we are on target and will close out the fiscal year in good shape.

There was a discussion between the Board and staff. There was no public comment.

Upon motion by Director Ragan, seconded by Director Loverde, the Board approved the finance report dated September 26, 2023 and the supporting Items 13.1-13.4, as presented. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

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

14. [Staff Reports](#)

- 14.1 [Fire Chief](#)
- 14.2 [Division Chief – Operations / Training](#)
- 14.3 [Division Chief – Fire Marshal / Forest Fuels / PIO / Facilities](#)
- 14.4 [A Shift Battalion Chief - Emergency Medical Services](#)
- 14.5 [B Shift Battalion Chief - Safety](#)
- 14.6 [C Shift Battalion Chief - Logistics](#)

Staff reports were reviewed and no action was taken.

There was a discussion between Board and staff. There was no public comment.

15. [Next Board Meeting and Other Important Dates](#)

- *October 24, 2023 – regular Board meeting canceled*
- *November 7, 2023 – regular Board meeting*
- *December 5, 2023 – regular Board meeting*

There was no Board or public comment.

16. Board Comments/Information Items

There were no board comments or information items.

Closed session opened at 6:08 p.m.

17. CLOSED SESSION ITEM:

CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS: to meet with the Fire Chief or other designated representative in connection with Interest Based Negotiations with the North Tahoe Professional Firefighters Association and the District's unrepresented employees. Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.9

Closed session ended at 6:35 p.m. and the open session was reconvened.

18. Discuss and possible approval of the 2024-2028 Memorandum of Understanding between the District and North Tahoe Professional Firefighters Association regarding represented employees

Upon motion by Director Ragan, seconded by Director Baffone, the Board approved the 2024-2028 Memorandum of Understanding and authorized the Fire Chief to execute the same. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was five in favor:

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

19. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned by President Baffone at 6:37 p.m.