



Meeks Bay Fire Protection District

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Michael Schwartz, CHIEF

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:
Edward I. Miller
Korie Kromydas
Jennifer Lemke

Meeks Bay Fire Protection District Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes

February 17, 2021

Directors Present: Vice President Kromydas, Director Lemke and President Miller

1. Call to Order

The meeting of Meeks Bay Fire Protection District Board of Directors, for the month of February was called to order at 3:32pm by President Miller.

2. Additions to Agenda/Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Vice President Kromydas and seconded by Director Lemke to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Past Minutes

It was moved by Director Lemke and seconded by Vice President Kromydas to approve the Board Minutes dated January 20, 2021, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Financial

It was moved by President Miller and seconded by Vice President Kromydas to accept the financial reports, items 4.A-E, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Public Input

There was none.

6. Business Requiring Action

A. Review of Candidate Application(s) and Possible Selection to Fill Board Vacancies

There were no candidate applications submitted.

B. Letter to North Tahoe Fire Protection District Board of Directors Endorsing Chief Steve Leighton to be Acting Chief of North Tahoe Fire Protection District

President Miller presented and the Board reviewed the letter of endorsement to North Tahoe Fire Board of Directors in support of Chief Steve Leighton to be Acting Fire Chief of North Tahoe Fire Protection District.

It was moved by Director Lemke and seconded by Vice President Kromydas to authorize President Miller to sign the letter of endorsement on behalf of Meeks Bay Fire Board of Directors and instruct staff to deliver the letter to North Tahoe Fire's Board Clerk. The motion passed unanimously.



C. Long-term Planning with North Tahoe Fire

President Miller introduced Supervisor Sue Novasel, LAFCo Executive Officer Jose Henriquez, and South Fork Consulting Principal Amanda Ross.

Henriquez:

- Clarified that LAFCo does not receive any incentives from the county. Their funding is provided from agency contributions.
- Currently in talks with Placer County LAFCo about the possibility of El Dorado County LAFCo being the lead agency with regard to possible dissolution and annexation of Meeks Bay Fire. El Dorado LAFCo will be sending a letter to Placer LAFCo next week requesting the transfer of jurisdiction. Each LAFCo agency would be responsible for Sphere of Influence studies.
- Upon Director Lemke asking, it was suggested that the numbers used in the ESCI study should be updated in the next year or two.
- If the districts choose to proceed with a reorganization, he will commit both LAFCo agencies to hold as many town hall/community meetings as possible in order to reassure the public of what is involved in the process.
- The makeup of a board following consolidation is decided during the LAFCo process.
- By law, LAFCo will need to make a determination about the viability of the district's future and encourages the board to move forward with a merger/annexation/consolidation.
- The district's identity does not need to be lost; the Meeks Bay station can retain its name.
- Both districts would need to do an analysis regarding fiscal impact for both districts. The districts have a lot of control as they move through the LAFCo process.

Ross:

- Average revenue increase for the district has been about 3.3% each year for the past six years (this did not exclude large, one-time grant funds, etc.). There has been an 8% increase of expenses each year over the same six-year period (this also did not exclude any large, single-year purchases). Based on this information, it is anticipated the district reserve fund will be exhausted by fiscal year 2023/2024. A preliminary analysis was shared and will be emailed for the board to review.
- Based on duplicate costs and redundancies of both districts, there is an assumption that up to approximately \$700,000 could be saved by the two districts, however, this could be lower.
- While on the surface the district does not appear to have the financial constraints as some other districts. When looking at projected revenue and expenditure changes, Meeks Bay Fire is not in the best shape. Recommends beginning conversations with North Tahoe Fire now before the district is in a position where the reserve fund has been drawn down so much that consolidation is no longer a viable option.
- The goal is to have the MSR/SOI report approved by LAFCo by this summer. The document will cover the entire county.
- Clarified that expenses are already out-pacing revenues. The reserve funds are what would be drawn down by 2023/2024.

Miller:



- Would like to get an idea of what an additional tax would need to be if the district chooses to remain a separate entity.
- Asked if the ambulance fee would be impacted by a consolidation. (*Answered by Supervisor Novasel and Chief Schwartz below.*)
- The district did not negotiate the agreement with North Tahoe Fire with the expectation that the next step would be consolidation.

Novasel:

- The county believes that consolidation would bring more stabilization to districts. They aren't pushing for consolidation, but rather encouraging stabilization.
- The ambulance fee is between El Dorado County and North Tahoe Fire.

Schwartz:

- El Dorado County pays North Tahoe Fire, as a subcontractor, for ambulance service. Other communities in El Dorado County also pay an ambulance fee.

Kromydas:

- Questioned how much would taxes need to be raised, and how much less support would the district receive to raise taxes, than in past years.

Crawford:

- Concerned that upon draw down of reserve funds, Meeks Bay Fire will no longer look attractive to any other agency with regard to merging, consolidating or annexing.
- Believes that it is time for Meeks Bay Fire, after almost seven years of functional consolidation, to move forward.
- Believes that most residents don't recognize the fact that we (the districts) aren't one agency already.

Sheppard:

- Understands the sense of community; each station around the lake has their own sense of community. This would not be lost upon consolidation.
- "When we signed this contract, it was always moving towards consolidation." North Tahoe staff had the understanding that with the agreement, the two districts would be moving towards consolidation.
- The sooner the districts start saving money on resources, the sooner there can be more boots on the ground.

No action was taken at this meeting. President Miller directed staff to include this item on the March agenda to allow for continued discussion.

D. Next Board Meeting Dates

The next meetings of the Board of Directors will be March 17th and April 21st.

7. Chief's Reports

Chief Leighton updated the board on activities since the last meeting. Items of particular interest included:

Leighton:

- Thanked the directors for their letter of support to North Tahoe Fire Board.
- Three new firefighters graduated at the top of the academy.



- Firefighter Lockhart and Engineer Frey have returned from their special assignments to Murietta and Fresno, assisting hospitals with COVID-19 support.
- Updated grant information.
- 93.7% of staff have received their vaccines.
- Continuing standby coverage for vaccinations at Sierra College in Truckee.

McNamara:

- Started a plan review application process on February 1st. This is in an attempt to avoid resubmittals, thereby reducing staff and customer time processing plans.
- New cost recovery schedule will begin on March 1st.
- Awarded community risk assessment grant, which will help evaluate data and have a better understanding of what our risk is.
- Developing a permit process to mitigate various hazards in the district.
- Will act as a technical specialist for fireworks, will no longer be responsible for approving or permitting, only inspecting.
- FPO Talina Sky has submitted her resignation effective February 26th to take a position at Truckee Fire.
- DSI Gley's temporary/seasonal position has been extended to February 26th. Anticipate hiring her back for the 2021 defensible space inspection season.

8. Information Items

- Report from Sustainable Community Advocates

9. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved by Director Lemke and seconded by Vice President Kromydas to adjourn the meeting of the Board of Directors at 5:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Shawn R. Crawford
Clerk of the Board

Staff Attendees:

Fire Chief Steve Leighton
Fire Chief Michael Schwartz
Division Chief Steve McNamara
Director of Finance Kim Eason
Clerk of the Board Shawn Crawford
Battalion Chief Scott Sedgwick
Captain Jamie Sheppard
Captain Brent Armstrong
Engineer Dave Telfer
Fuels Coordinator Eric Horntvedt

Additional Attendees:

LAFCo Executive Officer Jose Henriquez
EDCo Supervisor Sue Novasel
South Fork Consulting Principal Amanda Ross
Ellie Beals