

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS, SIERRA FOREST FIRE
PROTECTION DISTRICT**

TUESDAY

2:00 P.M.

DECEMBER 9, 2003

PRESENT:

David Humke, Chairman
Jim Shaw, Vice Chairman
Jim Galloway, Commissioner
Pete Sferrazza, Commissioner
Bonnie Weber, Commissioner

Amy Harvey, County Clerk
Katy Singlaub, County Manager
Madelyn Shipman, Legal Counsel
Tim Rochelle, Regional Forester

The Board met in regular session in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada, and conducted the following business:

AGENDA

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, on motion by Commissioner Shaw, seconded by Commissioner Weber, which motion duly carried, Chairman Humke ordered that the agenda for the December 9, 2003 meeting be approved.

03-19SF MINUTES

On motion by Commissioner Shaw, seconded by Commissioner Sferrazza, which motion duly carried, Chairman Humke ordered that the minutes of the March 11, May 19 and August 12, 2003 meetings be approved

03-20SF REPORT OF DISTRICT ACTIVITY

Tim Rochelle, Regional Forester, presented statistics concerning the total number of incidents, by type of incident, the District has responded to in calendar year 2003. He noted one incident not reflected in the report is that District personnel did respond to the fires in southern California.

**03-21SF REQUEST TO REPLACE FIREFIGHTER II POSITIONS WITH
FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDICS AS VACANCIES OCCUR**

Tim Rochelle, Regional Forester, stated the District is in transition, especially at Station 5 in the Verdi district; and he is recommending using 2004 funds in

the current budget to hire up to three additional Firefighter/Paramedics for Verdi effective upon any Firefighter II vacancies occurring to provide increased ALS (advanced life support) service. He added he is not anticipating any vacancies between now and July 1, 2004.

Commissioner Shaw stated he is a Member of the District Board of Health, and part of that Board's responsibility is REMSA (Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority) which does provide service to Verdi. He said he was concerned that there would be as many paramedics as firefighters and a duplication of services provided.

Commissioner Weber stated she shared the same concerns. She also noted there is an extra crew available from Cold Springs and asked why something could not be done with that crew. Madelyn Shipman, Assistant District Attorney, advised that Truckee Meadows and Sierra Forest Firefighters could not be mingled.

Forester Rochelle stated REMSA has a 15-minute response time to Verdi and he believes having an extra ALS unit in the area of Verdi would be extremely beneficial.

Commissioner Sferrazza stated the first responders are usually the firefighters and, if they are first on scene saving a life, the time difference is important. He added, since most of the calls are health related, he does not have a problem with paying the extra for the Firefighter/Paramedic versus the Firefighter II. Commissioner Sferrazza requested the Forester and REMSA provide the response time numbers, information on how many times REMSA is first on scene, and how far behind the other agency was. He stated he would like to have those facts before making a decision on this matter.

Commissioner Galloway noted that he is hesitant to make changes until he knows what is going to happen with the City of Reno.

Jim Gubbels, Vice President, REMSA, stated REMSA and the Fire District are co-responders, and the REMSA unit is an ALS unit with a paramedic on board. He stated their concern is skill degradation because when there are too many paramedics, everyone's skill level goes down. He stated their base for this area is at Robb Drive and Interstate 80, and their response time to Verdi is very short. In response to Commissioner Sferrazza, Mr. Gubbels stated they are first on the scene about 50 percent of the time, and usually both units arrive within a minute of each other.

Sam Dehne, Reno citizen, noted since there are no vacancies expected within the next six months, this appears to be moot. He also said if there was a bottomless pit of money, everyone would love to have as many paramedics as they could have.

Herb Brady, REMSA and Care Flight Paramedic, explained the progressive levels of care expertise and stated that the current system of service by all in Washoe County is one of the best in the Country.

On motion by Commissioner Shaw, seconded by Commissioner Weber, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Sferrazza voting "no," Chairman Humke ordered that the request to hire Firefighter/Paramedics for the Verdi District effective upon Firefighter II vacancies occurring be denied at this time. It was further ordered that, if there are any vacancies, staff be directed to present the request to the Board at that time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sam Dehne, Reno resident, spoke in opposition to any tax money being used on a baseball stadium.

Al Hesson, Reno resident, stated the \$10,000,000 ballpark is now approaching \$40,000,000 and suggested the private interests have much to gain and should utilize their own money or financing.

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There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned.

DAVID HUMKE, Chairman
Sierra Forest Fire Protection District

ATTEST:

AMY HARVEY, Washoe County Clerk
and Ex Officio Clerk, Sierra Forest
Fire Protection District

*Minutes Prepared by
Sharon Gotchy, Deputy County Clerk*