

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
TRUCKEE MEADOWS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
SIERRA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

JOINT MEETING

MONDAY

4:00 P.M.

FEBRUARY 22, 2010

PRESENT:

David Humke, Chairman*
Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairperson
Bob Larkin, Commissioner
Kitty Jung, Commissioner

Amy Harvey, County Clerk
Katy Simon, County Manager
Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel

Michael Greene, Sierra Fire Protection District Fire Chief
Tim Alameda, City of Reno and Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District
Interim Fire Chief

ABSENT:

John Breternitz, Commissioner

The Board convened simultaneously in special session as the Washoe County Board of Commissioners and the Board of Fire Commissioners for the Sierra Fire Protection District (SFPD) and the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) at 4:09 p.m. in Rooms 103 and 105 of the Regional Public Safety Training Center, 5190 Spectrum Boulevard, Reno, Nevada. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, the Clerk called the roll and the Board conducted the following business:

County Manager Katy Simon stated: "The Chairman and Board of County Commissioners intend that their proceedings should demonstrate the highest levels of decorum, civic responsibility, efficiency and mutual respect between citizens and their government. The Board respects the right of citizens to present differing opinions and views, even criticism, but our democracy cannot function effectively in an environment of personal attacks, slander, threats of violence, and willful disruption. To that end, the Nevada Open Meeting Law provides the authority for the Chair of a public body to maintain the decorum and to declare a recess if needed to remove any person who is disrupting the meeting, and notice is hereby provided of the intent of this body to preserve the decorum and remove anyone who disrupts the proceedings."

10-141 AGENDA ITEM 3 – PUBLIC COMMENT

Agenda Subject: "Public Comment. Comment heard under this item will be limited to two minutes per person and may pertain to matters both on and off the

Commission agenda. The Commission will also hear public comment during individual action items, with comment limited to two minutes per person. Comments are to be made to the Commission as a whole.”

There was no response to the call for public comment.

10-142 AGENDA ITEM 4

Agenda Subject: “Presentation and public comment on draft Washoe County Fire and Fire Based Emergency Medical Services Master Plan.

Katy Simon, County Manager, conveyed Commissioner Breternitz’s apologies for not being present, but he was attending a meeting in Incline Village. She noted this meeting was being video taped for him to watch prior to tomorrow’s Board of County Commissioners (BCC) Board action.

Kurt Latipow, Fire Services Coordinator, advised comments for this item were still arriving at the Manager’s Office. He noted they would be compiled into an addendum for tomorrow’s BCC agenda item regarding the January 2010 Fire and Fire Based Emergency Medical Services Master Plan.

Mr. Latipow expressed his gratitude to the staff of the Regional Public Safety Training Center for their assistance in setting up this meeting. He introduced the consultants from Diamante Partners, LLC, Retired Fire Chief Rick Martinez, Retired Chief Jeff Meston, Mark Ghilarducci, and Patti Bisharat.

Mr. Martinez stated due to this being an age of fast communications, such as video streaming, people had come to expect rapid decisions and rapid change; but modifying the area’s fire service would happen slowly. He said there were no quick fixes; instead there would be a series of decisions and/or options that, when taken together, would hopefully help the community migrate towards a more systematic fire service. He acknowledged some of the recommendations could be financially costly or might have policy or community implications.

Mr. Martinez reviewed his PowerPoint presentation on the Fire and Fire-Based Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Master Plan, which addressed the scope, the process used to address the scope, the observations and findings, and the recommendations. A copy of the presentation was placed on file with the Clerk. He emphasized that at no time was it felt there was any attempt by the County’s staff to drive the recommendations towards a predetermined outcome, and the conclusions arrived at were those of Diamante Partners, LLC. He noted that, even though everyone worked collectively, some of the statistics were arrived at using unorthodox manners and some things were cobbled together. Nonetheless, he felt the report provided a real sense of the community’s performance.

4:26 p.m. Chairman Humke arrived during Mr. Martinez's discussion of the key operational issues as shown on slide 9.

Mr. Martinez said when he reviewed the recommendation to conduct a more detailed financial review, (slide 11) items such as risk management, workers compensation, and legal advice would have to be considered for the regional fire agency's budget. He noted those items would be spread out among the departments within a full-service city. He stated the fire station locations were not unique because, in a number of communities, fire stations were located on the edges of districts instead of being spread throughout the community. He stated it was not unusual when looking at redeploying the existing fire stations, that some stations could be closely located while there could be gaps in coverage caused by the initial establishment of the stations and then by the infill growth that occurred over time. He said that was why a complete fire station plan would serve the County well in moving forward.

Mr. Martinez reviewed slide 10, which covered recommending establishing a Joint Powers Authority (JPA), and slide 12 that identified the recommendations for improving the integration of volunteer fire departments.

Mr. Martinez said the Diamante Partners identified Arrowcreek as having a service gap in fire station coverage and recommended the construction and staffing of a fire station consistent with the original development plans.

Mr. Martinez said regardless of what was done with the fire stations, it would be all for naught if the other elements, such as the 911 transferring of calls, were not addressed. He reviewed slides 14 and 15, which addressed the 911 Emergency Communications Services (ECOMM) recommendations. He said the issue of transferring the 911 calls and the locations of the fire stations were the two critical elements that needed to be addressed to achieve a well organized fire service.

Mr. Martinez said the Diamante Partner's recommendations were to establish a unified single regional fire agency under a JPA, improve integration of volunteers, further evaluate and improve 911 dispatch services, and further evaluate and improve the EMS delivery system.

Mr. Martinez stated there was a lot to be proud of in the existing system, including the fact that the study was commissioned by the Board of County Commissioners. He said the Interlocal Agreement demonstrated the community's willingness to look toward a collaborative endeavor and the fire service's leadership, both labor and management, were interested in continuing that collaboration by exploring ways to be more efficient. He stated the fact that the radio system was a region-wide system was a huge plus as was the single communication center (ECOMM). He said the County had laid a foundation that would make a difference.

Mr. Martinez discussed the economic situation and noted that local government was where service demands and available resources would come together.

He said the revenue stream, which was mostly supported by property taxes, was a finite resource that had been changing, but not for the better. He advised the recommendations did consider costs with some things being done now and other things taking time to accomplish. He concluded if nothing else, this report had generated interest and started a dialog in the community.

Vice Chairperson Weber thanked Mr. Martinez for an excellent report.

Tim Alameda, City of Reno and Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Interim Fire Chief, said the City of Reno had the opportunity to review the Master Plan over the last two weeks. He stated a big part of the Master Plan for him was where it was noted, "further review and improvements." He advised the City of Reno wanted to seek improvements in customer service, operations, fire prevention, EMS, administration, and the 911 dispatch system.

Michael Greene, Sierra Fire Protection District (SFPD) Fire Chief, said the political boundaries were what separated the fire service personnel. He stated he saw the recommendations as an exciting new opportunity to chart a new course, and he hoped the JPA would provide the Commission with the opportunity to provide input on setting the fire service's direction and course.

Chief Greene emphasized the study noted the fire district was unique because it was a thin ribbon of territory along the Sierras. He stated normally fire districts were geographical squares and the stations were located so they could provide backup for each other. He said the steps the Commission took in stabilizing the SFPD when it was inherited from the State, would allow it to be part of a regional authority on an equal basis.

Chief Greene noted the fire service had very little input regarding Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA) despite the majority of the responses being EMS responses. He said the SFPD was seeing a 15-20 minute response time, so medics were being placed on the fire engines to reduce the response time. He advised he agreed with the recommendation to evaluate the current EMS delivery model.

Chief Greene felt staffing the Arrowcreek station would create new opportunities without negatively influencing the Mt. Rose station's service delivery. He said giant steps had been taken in the last six months in terms of regionalizing; bringing people together; and settling on a common contract, policy and procedures, and training. He stated that was a foundation that could continue to be built upon. He said after talking with all of the fire service personnel present, everyone was ready to make this a success and they were looking to the Board to provide direction.

Vice Chairperson Weber called for public comment and requested the speakers representing a group go first.

Steven Perez stated he was the fire liaison for the Arrowcreek community, but the comments were his because they had not been approved by the Homeowners Association Board. He said the number one issue in Arrowcreek was how the Commissioners could continue to support Station 30, which had only 200 SFPD constituents. That Station responded to approximately 500 TMFPD constituents, which placed their needs over the needs of 10,000 SFPD and 4,500 TMFPD constituents in the middle of Mt. Rose.

Mr. Perez read bullet points 1 through 5 on page 1 of his prepared statement, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He stated the only thing he could find in the Diamante Partner's report that reinforced keeping Station 30 open was that the people in the area were accustomed to having a fire station. He said the people in the Arrowcreek area had been paying for that nicety for about 10 years and it was time they started getting what they were paying for.

Mr. Perez said the report talked about "best practices" and "recognized fire and safety standards," but firefighter safety was always compromised when the additional help needed to fight a large structural fire was 15-20 minutes away. He stated the Arrowcreek fire station would provide much needed backup for the other station.

Mr. Perez stated the current Reno/Truckee Meadows agreement should expire in July 2011. He said the Arrowcreek area did not oppose being consolidated with the TMFPD, but they were vehemently opposed to being consolidated with the TMFPD and having the current Interlocal Agreement extended. He said cancelling the Agreement and consolidating the TMFPD and the SFPD into a County fire agency would provide better economy, the money to staff the Arrowcreek fire station, and more consistent fire and medical coverage for all constituents. He strongly recommended the Commissioners pursue building and staffing the Arrowcreek fire station.

Jim Gubbels, REMSA Vice President, said the Commissioners were provided written comments regarding the Fire and Fire Based EMS Master Plan on January 26, 2010 and additional comments were provided to the Joint Fire Advisory Board (JFAB) on February 4, 2010. He agreed with Mr. Martinez that the EMS service in the community was excellent because of the fire first response and the REMSA services.

Mr. Gubbels stated the Master Plan recommended reproducing the EMS dispatch piece at the Reno 911 Center, and REMSA did not feel that was cost effective. He agreed it could be made more efficient and discussions regarding that had already started.

Mr. Gubbels said REMSA was providing advanced life support (ALS) paramedics on its ambulances and there was an expensive cost associated with providing ALS paramedics at the fire first response level. He stated recent medical research from the Toronto Fire Department looked at fire first response ALS as not providing a strong benefit towards a patient's outcome. He said the study encompassed over 250,000 cases and it showed only 1.25 percent of the EMS calls in the Toronto system provided an

opportunity for a critical care fire response intervention prior to the arrival of an ambulance. He explained it took awhile to access the situation regarding a patient and getting the basics started, such as opening airways. He stated REMSA's recommendations were based on medical research and clinical data.

Kevin Cavanagh stated he represented Washoe County's professional firefighters, which included the City of Reno, the City of Sparks, the Airport Authority, and the SFPD firefighters. He discussed his background, which included being a Fire Captain for the City of Sparks. He noted the City of Sparks chose to reduce staffing to three-person crews for fire apparatus. He stated it was frustrating for fire personnel to show up at a fire and then waiting for another fire engine to arrive, while they watched a family's property being destroyed. He advised he watched Reno fire trucks go past two Spark's fire stations to respond to accidents on areas of I-80 within the County.

Mr. Cavanagh said there were delays in dispatching due to the mutual aid agreements, which meant the closest fire engine usually did not get there first. He discussed other issues involving dispatch delays regarding medical emergencies. He felt this was not the best service that could be delivered to the community and should be unacceptable to this Board.

Mr. Cavanagh said Washoe County's professional firefighters were here to ask the elected officials to acknowledge the community was hemorrhaging financially and to stop putting band-aids on the system, such as a contract with Truckee Meadows Fire, three-person staffing, and closing stations. The firefighters felt the community would be better served with a consolidated fire department that would have the combined depth of resources and with a fire-based EMS system that would protect the community in an effective and cost-efficient manner. He advised the firefighters were willing to work to facilitate the creation of a fire protection district that would encompass the entire region. He said it was felt the Diamante Partner's study was the first step in that direction.

Donna Peterson read from her prepared remarks, which were placed on file with the Clerk. She felt a JPA should be created and all taxpayers should benefit equally from the services regardless of where they lived. The station on Joy Lake Road should be staffed, the Arrowcreek station should be built and staffed, and REMSA's responses and cost effectiveness should be studied. She asked the Board to keep in mind that this year's fire season was fast approaching.

Robert Parker read from his prepared remarks that addressed how his fire taxes were dispersed, asked that the Interlocal Agreement with Reno not be renewed, and asked that the boundaries be redrawn or reimbursement be required to provide fiscal equity. A copy of his statement was placed on file with the Clerk.

Diane Rose read from her prepared remarks, which were placed on file with the Clerk. She encouraged the Board to build and staff the new fire station and to staff the Joy Lake fire station. She also agreed with the recommendation to establish a JPA, felt the current Interlocal Agreement should be terminated, and that fire-based

transport for medical services should be explored to augment or replace REMSA's services.

Bob Ackerman recognized Alex Kukulus, President of the Sierra Firefighters Association, along with the President of the union for the Reno Fire Department whose name he could not recall at the moment, for being the type of people that everyone would want in their organization.

Mr. Ackerman read from his prepared remarks regarding what was omitted from the Master Plan report regarding the JPA. He felt the study should have been done by the professionals within the local governments instead of paying for consultants to do it. A copy of his remarks was placed on file with the Clerk.

Donna Perez read a prepared statement from Randy Bynum who was a 10-year resident of Arrowcreek. His statement addressed the unacceptable response times and the millions of dollars paid in taxes while service levels remained the same. He implored the Board to take advantage of the grant and to find sources to fund the balance to move the new fire station along and fully staff it.

Linda Sharif noted the 16 to 18 minute response time to her Arrowcreek home was far too long. She felt the residents were fortunate to have the services of Chief Greene and they spoke highly of him and his work. She stated the issue involved more than just building a new fire station; however, she asked the Board to move quickly so the stimulus money to build the Arrowcreek station would not be lost.

Sally Weichert read from her prepared remarks regarding her concerns with REMSA's exclusive franchise and the need for a fire-based medical transport system. A copy of her remarks was placed on file with the Clerk.

Kate Kenny read from her prepared remarks regarding the stimulus funds secured by Chief Greene for the construction of the Arrowcreek fire station. She noted Chief Greene worked tirelessly to improve fire services. She requested staff be instructed to work with him on staffing the new station while continuing to work on other elements of the Master Plan, so the funding for the station would not be jeopardized. A copy of her remarks was placed on file with the Clerk.

Tom Dunn advised he was a local firefighter. He said the two-tiered system relied on everyone for its success and each tier should respect the other tier and the community. He stated a system that was great in 1994 might not be the best system now. He said questions should be asked about the EMS system, such as what the yearly employee turnover rate was and what were the vehicle accident rates and the causes of those accidents. He stated the same questions should be asked of all of the EMS providers to ensure there was a level playing field. He said all the firefighters wanted was to provide another service to the community for its betterment instead of for the betterment of someone's pocketbook.

Mr. Kukulus felt the fire service issue needed to be focused on before that of the EMS service. He said REMSA made some comments in the media, which he was personally insulted by, as were other firefighters. He stated a *Reno Gazette-Journal* article last week stated that paramedics made no appreciable difference in a patient's outcome, and in an article today Patrick Smith, Director of REMSA, stated firefighters should not be allowed to place a tube in someone's throat because they could accidentally kill them. He attested he had been a paramedic for 11 years and had successfully used his skills to save lives. He hoped the Board would look at REMSA's issues for what they were worth.

Cliff Low asked what the recommendation was based on that indicated the SFPD could not continue as a standalone entity. He understood the City of Reno's taxpayers did not pay a separate assessment for fire protection because it was part of the General Fund. He asked how a JPA could be created that would combine all of the fire districts when there was no specific money set aside by the City of Reno for firefighting. He asked if all of the money the people in the County had been paying for firefighting would be tossed into the pot for the City of Reno to decide how much fire protection there would be. He stated he was surprised so many people favored a JPA, and he wondered if the City of Reno would go along with the County and the City having equal input into what would happen with the fire services. He also wondered if the people in Galena Forest and St. James Estates would favor the JPA if a station in their area would not be staffed; and if the Arrowcreek people would favor a JPA if, somewhere down the road, their station was closed.

There was no further response to the call for public comment.

Commissioner Larkin asked about the status of the stimulus funding for the Arrowcreek station. Chief Greene replied last week the SFPD was asked for an environmental assessment and there was a contract with a firm to provide that assessment. He said he just spoke with Senator Harry Reid's Washington, D.C. staff who would be facilitating a meeting to focus on what were and were not allowable expenses, and they pledged their assistance in getting the full funding. He said he asked them if the funding was in anyway compromised, and they replied they would not let that happen.

Commissioner Larkin said the cost was \$3 million and the funding was \$2.1 million. He asked what the strategy was if there were not the Congressional appropriations for the full amount. Chief Greene replied the original grant guideline was for 100 percent funding, but the budget showed some of the things that were excluded. He said he explained to Senator Reid's Office that some items were excluded such as the required sprinkler system. He also explained the station design had been built twice already and those budgets were still applicable. He indicated there had been no request for additional funding because it was believed to be 100 percent funded, but now it was not and he wanted to know why. He anticipated there would be a conference call meeting set up sometime next week to get the explanation from the contractors who reviewed the application.

Commissioner Larkin stated he did not see in the report a discussion about Truckee Meadows Station 14 in juxtaposition with the Arrowcreek station. He noted the original questions posed were: 1) could the SFPD stand on its own in relation to the area of service it covered; and, 2) what realignments of stations needed to take place. Mr. Meston replied it was suggested one of the immediate issues was the Arrowcreek station but, once the JPA was up and running, an entire station location study should be done to tweak the existing City of Reno, SFPD and TRFPD fire stations to provide better coverage.

Commissioner Larkin asked why they were leaning towards a JPA instead of having a contract between the TMFPD and the SFPD, which he imagined would be similar to what TMFPD had with the City of Reno. Mr. Martinez replied governance was an issue and the intent was to provide equal footing for the Board of Fire Commissioners and the City of Reno. He said the City of Reno had other station sites planned, so all of the present staffing and locations should be looked at with the intent of becoming more efficient and using the available resources. He explained the SFPD was very long and was negatively impacted by the City of Reno's annexations of which Verdi was a prime example. He said it was strongly felt the better approach was to blend all of the organizations and to have regional governance. He stated there was revenue, but not much could be done to tweak the revenue because it was pretty static. He said some things could be done to modify the cost of providing service by addressing labor and capital costs, which would drive the level of service. He stated once labor and capital costs were set, there would be a pool of resources that could be redistributed.

Commissioner Larkin felt it was not that simple. He advised the County's two water entities were being consolidated, but there was the matter of the inequity that accrued when two entities had similar services while having a dissimilar structure. He noted the Water Resources Department was governed by the Board of County Commissioners and Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) was governed through a JPA. He said there were equity concerns with the bondholders and with the fees being paid, while assessment and equipment disparities made it a complex matter to bring two entities, one of which was not in a JPA, into a JPA. He stated the proposal was to create a JPA, but the logic of the report did not lead to that conclusion. He said it was true the resources could be leveled by moving towards a JPA; but there were disparities in how the SFPD and the TMFPD, which were two very dissimilar entities that offered a similar service, could comingle funds. He said it was a leap from the question that was asked if the SFPD would be stable on its own over a long period of time. He felt the answer was yes, except for building a fire station due to the \$900,000 shortage. He said that would require some kind of revenue enhancement or redeployment of resources.

Mr. Martinez said he did not know if the SFPD would be stable long term. He noted the report and today's discussion indicated resources were being shared across boundaries, and the community questioned if they should be reimbursed for services provided to the TMFPD. He said in other parts of the community, the SFPD might be receiving service from TMFPD or the City of Reno. Looking at those shared resources was difficult because it was an ever-changing landscape. He said the point was twofold:

1) unify the existing resources through one regional body; and, 2) provide a regional governance model that would allow the County and the City of Reno to govern equally.

Mr. Martinez acknowledged the revenue streams were similar in that the revenue came primarily from property taxes, but there were two different tax rates. He noted the service demands might not come from the area paying the higher rate. He said it was complex but, from the Diamante Partners' perspective, it seemed to meet what they felt the Board would be interested in.

Commissioner Larkin asked how using a JPA would be better than using an Interlocal Agreement. Mr. Martinez replied the JPA would provide for governance. Commissioner Larkin said there was already governance. He stated a JPA was a huge task and this JPA might require Legislative action. He believed some advice from legal counsel would be needed, because there were some restrictions to the County's taking over the SFPD. Commissioner Larkin said if all of that was good, what advantage would the JPA provide for Station 14 and the new Arrowcreek station. Mr. Martinez said he believed the advantage was service could be balanced when looking at the service area (the regional fire department) as a whole. He said the Board of County Commissioners did not have input with respect to the decision making process regarding what would happen within the Reno Fire Department. He stated that had a watershed impact on TMFPD. Commissioner Larkin said the Board was in the process of trying to rectify that. He said Diamante's perspective was, while a JPA would be complex, in the end the Commissioner's footing would be equal with that of the City Councilmembers. Commissioner Larkin asked if the equal footing issue was what drove the decision to move towards a JPA, rather than the structure of the JPA itself. Mr. Martinez replied that was correct.

5:43 p.m. Chairman Humke left the meeting.

Commissioner Jung noted Richard Vandenberg, City of Reno Communication and Technology Director, was quoted in the *Reno Gazette-Journal* that the City of Reno had a Request for Proposal (RFP) out to fix the emergency response delays caused by cumbersome 911 call transfers between ECOMM and REMSA. Mr. Vandenberg replied there was an RFP out from the E-911 Funding Board, not the City of Reno, for a next generation 911 environment. He said it would bypass analog telephone lines and would start moving the technology towards digital, which would move data or call information back and forth very quickly. He said when talking about REMSA's CAD interface, it was believed that should have been available a long time ago. However, there were some issues in doing that because the CAD system also contained public safety information. He said that information could not be provided to anybody under State and Federal mandates. He explained the same thing was true with REMSA, because REMSA was governed under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements. He advised it was critical to determine how to narrow down the information being transported back and forth because of those mandates.

Mr. Vandenberg said the issue with the next generation 911 system was did anyone really want to invest \$100,000 to \$150,000 for an interface between two CAD systems if there was the potential of moving into something new in a relatively short time. Commissioner Jung asked who would make that decision. Mr. Vandenberg said that would be a financial decision that would have to be made, but the City of Reno did not have the money for the CAD interface. He stated there was some discussion on whether or not that could be funded out of the E-911 Fund, but that decision would require a legal review. He advised typically legal counsel had indicated modifications or upgrades to the CAD system were not part of the E-911 Funding mechanism.

Commissioner Jung asked who had the authority to tell everyone to stop buying new stuff until it was figured out what the entity would end up being. Mr. Vandenberg said E-911 funding would be used for the next generation 911, which would come before the County Commission for purchase approval. Commissioner Jung reiterated she felt it was wrong to go out and make investments in apparatus without knowing what direction things were heading. She felt something needed to be done, possibly at a joint meeting, to put a moratorium on all new investments until it was known the direction things were heading.

Commissioner Jung asked how much money the consolidation of the Truckee Meadows and the City of Reno Fire Departments saved the taxpayers. Mary Walker, Walker and Associates, said the primary savings every year was from the consolidation of the staffs, particularly the administrative staffs, and from the consolidation of the fire stations. She explained merging two fire stations into one would save approximately \$1.8 million a year. She believed the consolidation savings was \$5 to \$6 million a year for 10 years in addition to the increase in the level of service. She noted the Truckee Meadows average response time decreased 27 percent.

Ms. Simon said there were several examples of where purchase decision making was unified, such as the 800 MHz radio system. She noted the system had shared governance, while Washoe County was contracted to manage it; and all of the entities who were part of that system met to approve the budget. She said it did not apply to dispatch at this point, but there were opportunities for those discussions.

Commissioner Jung said slide 6 discussed the “Lack of accurate and/or complete response data to completely evaluate emergency response and station locations.” She asked who did not provide their data. Mr. Meston replied the issue was the data was not collected by everyone in the same manner.

Vice Chairperson Weber said at her last “Coffee and Conversation with Your Commissioner,” the discussion centered on fire services. She felt the unions, the volunteers, the Cities of Reno and Sparks, Washoe County, and the Airport Authority should be in the same room to hear the same information, which she did not believe had been the case. She felt everyone being on the same page would be in the best interests in serving the public. She reiterated everyone should be brought together quickly to figure this out. Mr. Latipow said staff did not disagree. He noted the scope of work for the

project was for those areas in which the County Commissioners had authority. He stated staff believed this was the first step, but the scope of work had to stick with what was appropriate.

Commissioner Larkin explained the contract with the City of Reno was renewed automatically unless 30-days notice was provided. He said JFAB was meeting every other week to fine tune many of the things being discussed, and it planned to wrap up its work by April 19 so Mr. Latipow could make presentations to Washoe County and the City of Reno at their May meetings. Mr. Latipow said staff was asking direction tomorrow regarding the Interlocal Agreement and the Master Plan. He agreed JFAB set an aggressive agenda regarding what they wanted to accomplish. Commissioner Jung said anyone with an idea had that idea placed on a bin list, but that list would have to be closed shortly.

6:02 p.m. Chairman Humke returned to the meeting.

Mr. Latipow said staff was looking at the minutes from the last two JFAB meetings to ensure that all the items on the bin list were captured. He agreed that list needed to be closed soon if staff was to present the Board with a workable road map of what would be coming forward at each JFAP meeting.

Vice Chairperson Weber requested a report to the Fire Commissioners at every Board meeting. Commissioner Larkin said either he or Commissioner Jung would provide an update tomorrow. He said staff was asked not to conduct extensive briefings because they were busy with the meetings, so it would be up to himself and Commissioner Jung to update the Board on what was happening at JFAB.

Ms. Simon said the Master Plan item on the BCC meeting for February 23, 2010 included a request for direction to bring back an implementation plan. She said that way every recommendation in the Diamante Partners' report could be vetted and have due diligence conducted on them. She wanted the public to be aware the Board would not be taking action at their meeting to approve recommendations, but would be giving direction to thoroughly staff those items and then to bring them back for the Board's review.

Vice Chairperson Weber asked who brought up the issue of volunteer use, training and standardization. Mr. Martinez said one issue was the volunteers were not dispatched consistently. He stated the issue with training and standardization was there were different levels of training, standardization and equipping; and those issues were identified during the interviews that were conducted. He said the recommendation to adopt training standards was either occurring or had already occurred. Mr. Latipow clarified the Master Plan study had taken 12 months to complete and this was one of several items that had been identified and was moving forward. He said collectively the fire agencies had embraced it, the volunteers were at the table, and great strides were being made in the area of utilization standardization.

Commissioner Weber asked about the discussions with the Washoe County Health Board regarding the development of a new approach for EMS delivery as shown on slide 15. Mr. Latipow said the Department of Health governed the franchise and the administration of the EMS programs.

Chairman Humke apologized for being late. He said a lot of issues had been uncovered and a lot of fights started, which was a good thing because it was making a lot of people think.

Chairman Humke asked the Commissioners to have a group of demonstration projects that would be part of whatever was done, which would include the SFPD itself as it was currently constituted. He said the SFPD was important to his and the Vice Chairperson's districts, and he was not sure it should be swallowed up by the larger fire agencies. He stated another demonstration project could consider a different type of staffing, such as two-person fire crews with medical credentials that would respond to medical calls using SUV's. He indicated he was not taking a shot at REMSA, but that scenario might work well in the outlying areas where responses were difficult. He suggested another possibility for a demonstration project would be to configure some type of volunteer crew, so volunteers could be used productively and the collaboration with the career fire service personnel could be improved.

Chairman Humke asked when the last fire stations were built for the Cities of Reno and Sparks and the SFPD. Mr. Latipow said the last Reno fire station built was Somerset's Station 19 in 2007; Station 5 in Sparks was built in 2005; and the last station built and staffed for the SFPD was the St. James station, which was built in 1997. He noted the St. James station was currently serving as battalion headquarters.

Chairman Humke said there was one funding pattern with the Reno Fire Department, which was a General Fund agency, and different funding patterns for SFPD and TMFPD. Chairman Humke said continuing on the theme of Commissioner Jung's and Commissioner Larkin's comments, why would the entities want to go to governance with such disparate fire service agencies without those problems being solved. He stated he would incorporate by reference the remarks of Mr. Lowe because he nailed the issue. Mr. Latipow said one of the items the consultants reviewed was how business was being conducted today to recommend what would be the most effective governance model, which resulted in the recommendation for a JPA. He stated while on the surface it did not appear a JPA would work, there were several JPA's where cities and districts were combined into a JPA. He said the largest and most efficient was Orange County, California, which combined cities that were funded by the General Fund, county areas that were fire district funded, and special districts such as Community Service Authorities (CSA's).

Mr. Latipow stated the City of Buena Park was a participant in the Orange County Fire Authority and they determined they wanted a service level of X due to the amusement park. So when it was time to build the budget, the Authority would determine the cost for the desired level of service and the City of Buena Park would make the

decision whether or not to fund at that level. He said when looking at this scenario locally, the SFPD would be a part of the JPA. He stated the desired level of service would require a contribution of X and, hopefully, that amount would match the dedicated and secured revenue stream. He said the same scenario would apply to the City of Reno. He said the contribution factor was way down in the weeds, which was why staff was recommending at tomorrow's meeting that an implementation plan be created.

Chairman Humke asked how long it took Orange County to create their Fire Authority. Chief Latipow replied Orange County's Fire Authority was created out of a financial disaster. He said a group of people cobbled together an operating plan, launched it, and then spent the next two years refining it, according to their retired Chief. Commissioner Larkin asked if that was the junk bond debacle. Mr. Latipow replied it was. He believed there was a tremendous opportunity here once again born out of an economic challenge.

Chairman Humke asked why automatic aid and mutual aid were done instead of settling up after every call. Mr. Latipow said automatic aid and mutual aid were based on an understanding of reciprocation. Chairman Humke asked if the agreements were predicated on equal playing fields. Mr. Latipow replied not necessarily. He stated mutual aid was provided every summer to agencies that might or might not be able to reciprocate even though automatic aid and mutual aid, per the agreements, were based on reciprocation. He explained if a certain threshold was exceeded, then the expectation was that, as much as possible, the sending entity would be made whole for the cost of those resources. Chairman Humke asked if that had ever happened. Mr. Latipow replied it had and tomorrow's agenda had an item requesting executing payment to several agencies that exceeded the threshold in fighting a fire here last summer.

Commissioner Larkin said the discussion was principally about fire services, but was also about medical calls. He noted he was not aware of there being a quid pro quo for medical calls. He believed right now the City of Reno contract with the TMFPD was for basic life support (BLS). Mr. Latipow replied the contract with Reno mandated that the previous level of service TMFPD had prior to consolidation remain. He said written within the Agreement was the mandate that they must staff the TMFPD engines with EMT-Intermediates (EMT-I's), which was above the basic level. Commissioner Larkin said it was, but it was not quite ALS level; while he believed the SFPD was at the ALS level. Mr. Latipow replied they were ALS with paramedics.

Commissioner Larkin said there were ALS services and, whether it was called ALS light or BLS heavy, it was a mixture. He did not understand how a JPA would enhance that better than a contractual relationship. Mr. Latipow replied everything within a shared governance model would be treated as one agency and that agency would set the standard of care to be delivered to the citizens regardless of whose district it was or regardless of the existing boundaries. For example, if the governing board wanted paramedics placed on the engines for the outlying areas because a longer response could be experienced, that choice could be made as long as the Health Department agreed and

the franchise agreement accepted it. He said that would eliminate SFPD having paramedics, TMFPD having EMT-I's, and the City of Reno having another level.

Commissioner Larkin said he was warming up to Chairman Humke's idea of having demonstration projects, and he wanted Mr. Latipow to think about that idea. He stated there were three really different fire services with three very different needs in servicing the public. He stated the SFPD was a different critter than the TMFPD in terms of the wildland fire and the ALS components. He explained the TMFPD was born in the era where there was a lot of discussion regarding whether the firefighters should provide service at the BLS or the ALS level or should there be a third party providing the service. He believed calling for an ALS level of support would be doable under an Interlocal Agreement with the TMFPD, and the delivery of the basic fire support was pretty ubiquitous between the two.

Vice Chairperson Weber stated she looked forward to tomorrow's discussion, and she thanked the public for attending. She also thanked the Diamante Partners for the work they did because it brought to light a lot of things the Board needed to examine and discuss.

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6:31 p.m. On motion by Chairman Humke, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Breternitz absent, it was ordered that the meeting be adjourned.

DAVID E. HUMKE, Chairperson
Washoe County Commission,
Sierra Fire Protection District, and
Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District

ATTEST:

AMY HARVEY, County Clerk,
Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners,
Ex Officio Clerk, Sierra Fire Protection District and
Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District

*Minutes Prepared by
Jan Frazzetta, Deputy County Clerk*