

**WASHOE COUNTY COMMISSION
RENO CITY COUNCIL
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS FOR
SIERRA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
AND
TRUCKEE MEADOWS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

JOINT MEETING

THURSDAY

2:30 P.M.

APRIL 19, 2012

PRESENT:

Bob Larkin, County Commissioner and Fire Commissioner, Chairman*
Bonnie Weber, County Commissioner and Fire Commissioner, Vice Chairperson*
John Breternitz, County Commissioner and Fire Commissioner
David Humke, County Commissioner and Fire Commissioner
Kitty Jung, County Commissioner and Fire Commissioner

Robert A. Cashell, City of Reno, Mayor
David Aiazzi, Reno City Councilmember
Dwight Dortch, Reno City Councilmember
Dan Gustin, Reno City Councilmember
Pierre Hascheff, Reno City Councilmember
Jessica Sferrazza, Reno City Councilmember
Sharon Zadra, Reno City Councilmember

The Commission and Council convened at 2:35 p.m. in joint session in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada. Also present were Washoe County Chief Deputy Clerk Nancy Parent, Washoe County Assistant Manager John Berkich, Washoe County Legal Counsel Paul Lipparelli, Reno City Clerk Lynnette Jones, Reno City Manager Andrew Clinger and Reno City Attorney John Kadlic.

12-346 AGENDA ITEM 3 – PUBLIC COMMENT

Agenda Subject: “Public Comment (three-minute time limit per person) – (Additional Public Comment on specific agenda items will be limited to three-minute time limit per person after each agenda item and must be related to the specific agenda item.) Comments are to be addressed to the Chair of the meeting and to the Reno City Council, the Washoe County Commission, Board of Fire Commissioners for Sierra Fire Protection District and the Board of Fire Commissioners for Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District as a whole.”

***2:38 p.m.** Chairman Larkin and Commissioner Weber arrived.

Howard Reynolds discussed the rate increase and retirement contributions included in the fire consolidation agreement. He said it was difficult for the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) and the City of Reno to meet costs, and was also reflective of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS). As of 2011, PERS had an unfunded liability of \$10 billion, which PERS staff stated would take 26 years to pay off that unfunded liability. Mr. Reynolds commented that he was appointed to the Retirement Board in 1990 and was told then that it would take 26 years to pay off the unfunded liability. In over 20 years, he said PERS had not made a dent in paying off that liability. Prior to consolidation, the TMFPD paid the employees' portion of the retirement contribution out of salaries, while the City paid those contributions from City funds. However, whenever there was a rate increase, the City certified to the retirement system that those costs came from the employees. He said when PERS was told that the employees' contribution was in lieu of an equivalent salary increase it was stated that the employees were paying, which was contrary to what was actually happening. He urged the City to correctly certify to the State what was occurring.

James Kozera suggested amendments to the grandfather clause in connection with the Reno Livestock Events Center's sound system, fireworks displays and certain unforeseen circumstances.

Dawn Cheeseman distributed a document to the Board and the Council, which was placed on file with the Clerk. She described the murder of her husband and the lack of cooperation from the Reno Police Department and the District Attorney's Office concerning details of the case. She pleaded to the Council and the Board for help in receiving information and/or a resolution in finding the facts and circumstances.

Bob Ackerman voiced his support for the regionalization of fire services, which would provide life safety for all the citizens of the region. He urged the Board and Council to take their time and establish an independent fire board.

Thomas Daly suggested the Board and Council focus on regionalization of fire services. He said the TMFPD and the City were bound under the labor agreement to continue moving forward. He suggested both entities seek assistance from the Legislature in order to establish a new business model for fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in the region.

Charles Lanzi and L.J. Leovic wished to yield their public comment time to Cliff Low.

Chairman Larkin explained that under the rules of the Board of County Commissioners the Board did not allow speakers to yield their time to another person. He said they could either speak or forfeit their time. Mr. Lanzi explained that a group of individuals were allowed to yield their time during the April 2, 2012 joint meeting and felt that a precedent had been set. Chairman Larkin stated he was not present at that meeting and reiterated the rules of the County Commission.

Commissioner Weber clarified that yielding of time did occur during the April 2nd joint meeting. Commissioner Humke indicated that he would invite Mr. Lanzi to speak at the end of the public comment period.

Councilmember Sferrazza asked if a vote could be taken to suspend the rules. Chairman Larkin stated the City of Reno could choose to do so, but the Board had already established those rules. Councilmember Sferrazza felt that citizens should be allowed to speak and moved to suspend the rules and allow citizens to speak or designate another person to speak for them. Councilmember Dortch felt that could create a number of problems in future meetings.

Chairman Larkin said if the Board wished to suspend their rules or procedures that would need to be amended. Paul Lipparelli, Legal Counsel, explained that the Board and the Council had their own rules and cultures and, if a majority of the members recognized an individual and the motion was made and carried to suspend the rules, he did not think that was unlawful; however, Councilmember Dortch had questioned that procedural wisdom. Mr. Lipparelli said he would leave the decision to the presiding officer and the majority of the membership from each entity to decide.

Commissioner Breternitz said there were various options available to hear from the public such as Board members or Councilmembers asking the citizen a question at the appropriate time.

Commissioner Humke said he would support the presiding officer in the ruling, but he also had a three-minute question for Mr. Low that may help him with his testimony.

Councilmember Sferrazza withdrew the motion. She noted in the time it took to debate the issue, the citizen could have spoken.

Chairman Larkin stated that public comment would proceed and then return with follow-up questions for individuals.

Cliff Low stated that the Board and Council would be hearing appeals from the public to not dismantle the Interlocal Agreement for fire services between the City and the TMFPD. He reminded the entities that the Interlocal Agreement had been given a one-year extension because the Joint Fire Advisory Board (JFAB) was attempting to solve some of the issues. Mr. Low said it had been two years since efforts started to save the Interlocal Agreement, which had failed. He felt that individuals were reaching out to the entities in fear of higher taxes and slower delivery of services.

Gene Gardella said that a broad enough view had not been taken in regard to an increase in insurance premiums. He stated that the Fire Service Tax should be raised to provide the proper services under a unified organization that would provide adequate service to the entire area. He stated that the Interlocal Agreement should remain until a service area could be provided that included proper service.

Steven Perez felt that the Board expected only goodwill when they offered Station 14 to the City for a lease rate of \$1.00 per year. In return, the City was now

stating that any automatic aid agreement was not equitable and they would have charged the TMFPD \$1.4 million to respond into the Caughlin Ranch and Hidden Valley areas. He said this was one of the many reasons why the County had voted to end the agreement since it was always one-sided. Instead of dealing in good faith and the best interest of City and County constituents, the City continued to apply tactics and strategies that fell just short of extortion. Mr. Perez suggested removing the offer for Station 14 and then staffing that Station with TMFPD employees in order to equal out any discrepancies from the two affected areas.

Sam Dehne stated that he never received any extra time for public comment and spoke on his dissatisfaction of what occurred earlier in this item.

Cathy Brandhorst addressed the Board and the Council.

Marty Richards commented when automatic aid was placed in the original Interlocal Agreement it was done under the best of intentions. He said there were a number of locations that had portions in the County and portions in the City. He said automatic aid was placed to benefit the City and the County since the back-up would be utilized for either entity. He requested that automatic aid continue for the good of the public.

In response to a question from Commissioner Humke, Mr. Low believed a fear of costing the taxpayers more money and a fear that firefighters would not arrive on scene in time, drove citizen's pleas to not deconsolidate. He said automatic aid was the answer and accomplished much of what regionalization did, which was dispatching the closest available unit. He did not think the two entities should work on a regionalization plan until all efforts had been exhausted toward resolving automatic aid.

In response to a question from Councilmember Zadra, Mr. Gardella spoke on the current insurance premiums in the Verdi area. A proposed solution would be to move the station that served the Verdi area closer to town in order to also serve the area near Caughlin Ranch. He explained if a house was over three miles from a fire station, a higher rate of insurance could be charged. The rates on fire insurance premiums in the Verdi area would increase significantly depending on the distance from the fire station.

Councilmember Sferrazza requested a status of the investigation discussed by Ms. Cheeseman and brought forward to the City Council.

Councilmember Aiazzi requested the number of Reno residents that spoke under public comment. Nancy Parent, Chief Deputy Clerk, replied that seven citizens were within the City of Reno and seven citizens stated their street addresses, but did not list their city.

12-347 AGENDA ITEM 4

Agenda Subject: “Approval of Agenda – April 19, 2012.”

There was no public comment on this item.

For Washoe County, on motion by Commissioner Breternitz, seconded by Chairman Larkin, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 4 be approved.

For the City of Reno, on motion by Councilmember Zadra, seconded by Councilmember Aiazzi, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that Agenda Item 4 be approved.

12-348 AGENDA ITEM 5

Agenda Subject: “Discussion and possible direction to staff regarding options for regional fire service, including but not limited to possible joint powers agreements between the Truckee Meadows and Sierra Fire Protection Districts, the City of Reno and other neighboring jurisdictions.”

Sierra Fire Protection District (SFPD) and Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Transitional Fire Chief Charles Moore said during the April 2, 2012 joint meeting, the Reno City Council (City) and the Board of Fire Commissioners (BOFC) discussed the formation of a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) as a means to move fire services closer to a regional model for service delivery.

Chief Moore and Reno/Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Chief Michael Hernandez stated that they met to discuss options for the short and long term issues. Following were their conclusions:

1. The City of Reno, the TMFPD, and the SFPD maintain their resolve and commitment to mutual aid that establishes access to and fast delivery of assistance to each other’s jurisdiction when requested for the control and stabilization of fire or other emergency that may overwhelm the resources of the requesting agency through professional and rapid response to the affected community regardless of boundary. The resolve to mutual aid would assure the public emergency services would be timely delivered and effective to the greatest extent possible, and that those essential services would be released as quickly as possible.
2. Pursue enhancements to mutual aid through technologically based solutions such as dynamic dispatch. Implementation of a technologically based mutual aid would require time to develop and design the model, seek budgetary authorization, and evaluate each respective agency’s organization.

3. Authorize the Fire Chiefs to establish a regional fire delivery working group whose direction was to identify challenges and opportunities in solutions for efficient and effective fire services.

Chief Hernandez said there were later discussions on the utilizations of volunteers and a path moving forward to bring in the regional fire chiefs in order to discuss a framework and mechanism in proceeding with a regionalized service delivery model.

Chief Moore commented that they both agreed that a regional fire delivery model would be ideal. He said service levels needed to be evaluated so when voters weighed in they would know what they were voting for in terms of service level, how much that service level would cost and also vote for elected representatives to govern. He said some planning steps needed to occur and believed that the planning should occur at the Chief level and encouraged the two entities to authorize the Chiefs to move forward with that planning. He said there were sections in the downtown core that may need a four-person engine company due to the concentration of risk, population and large buildings. However, as you move away from the downtown core there was less risk since there would be less population and less density. That concentration of risk was used to design a service level system without boundaries and put fire resources where they were most needed. After that planning was concluded, Chief Moore said the conclusion could be that some fire stations may be closed or moved, efficiencies may be gained from a regional fire service delivery, and only one fire protection bureau, which could open up financial efficiencies. He indicated that it could take up to 18 months to design such a system; however, the issue was bridging that gap in the meantime.

Commissioner Breternitz said that long-term, full regionalization was the ultimate goal, but he acknowledged that would take time because there were certain impediments that stood in the way over the short-term. The proposal was for staff to proceed with discussions for an interim structure that would have joint governance and separate departments in order to take advantage of any opportunity to receive benefits and efficiencies from coordinating the fire services. The administrative functions and efficiencies that did not impact the actual agreements currently in place for fire protection was a first step in achieving the ultimate goal of something more comprehensive. Because it was posed as a proposal from the Commission to the Council, he hoped to see how the Council felt about moving forward and taking logical steps versus the expectation of taking that giant leap. Commissioner Breternitz requested that part of this discussion be a response from the City for the proposal the Commission put on the table.

Chief Hernandez acknowledged that there was a need for a different service delivery model in the community. He said the County had elected to stand-up a new organization, but certain actions had to be taken to ensure that the delivery of service for the City was continuous. He stressed that the departments would work in unison for the best interest of the community.

Commissioner Humke remarked that Chief Moore had some experience with consolidation of fire service agencies in another state. He asked for an explanation on the benefit of that experience and a description of the critical steps and benchmarks. Chief Moore explained the consolidation area he had helped with had grown quickly to include large hotels and large structures. At the time, the existing fire services could not protect structures of that size. As service demands increased, he said the price of real estate also increased and the ability to train and recruit volunteers was lost. He said a regional fire district was developed in order to reach a service level that matched the risk. Chief Moore said officials were encouraged to view the service area from a helicopter, which enabled them to not see boundaries, but to see structures that had to be protected and where the population was located. He explained that a pro-forma was established to meet the citizen's expectations, which was a response time within eight minutes, 90 percent of the time. He said that service level was accomplished by a tax increase, the building of new stations and placing the stations where they were most needed.

Commissioner Humke asked if Chief Moore had been recruited by the TMFPD because of his consolidation experience. Chief Moore stated that was correct. Commissioner Humke indicated at a recent neighborhood meeting, Chief Moore described the Insurance Service Office (ISO) standards and asked for a description of the ISO rating. Chief Moore explained that the insurance rates may increase, but not as a result of separating fire departments. He said the hazard insurance reflected many items of which fire was just one component. He understood that fire insurance rates were based on a rating system of one through 10, one being the very best and 10 being the worst, meaning there was no fire department at all. Within the rating of one to nine, a nine was given when five road miles to a station was exceeded and 1,000 feet from a hydrant was exceeded.

Commissioner Jung asked how often a fire hydrant could be within 1,000 feet from a potential fire. Chief Moore stated there were some dry hydrants that were not charged by gravity and required a vacuum to be created in the pipe in order to draw the water from a static water source. Commissioner Jung asked if a water tender qualified as a fire hydrant being within 1,000 feet. Chief Moore explained that a water tender qualified as part of the water supply. Commissioner Jung remarked that some of the benchmarks mentioned for the unincorporated County were being degraded by the deconsolidation.

Chief Hernandez commented in his career he had gone through two ISO survey ratings where a key rate was set, which was how a certain area, region or property was benchmarked against threat, risk and protection. It was what the insurance industry used to fix a rate to a specific area or specific property. Typically, ISO came every 10 years and noted that the region was due for an ISO rating next year. He explained the process used by the ISO and that it would take a comprehensive look at the entity.

Councilmember Sferrazza inquired on the time frame for the Council to submit a County-wide ballot question. Lynette Jones, Reno City Clerk, replied for the general election in November, the question could be submitted as early as July.

Councilmember Sferrazza asked if a dedicated tax revenue had been discussed or the possibility to potentially hold off on the deconsolidation if a ballot question to regionalize went before the voters in November. Chief Hernandez stated that specific discussion had not been held at the staff level. Councilmember Sferrazza asked what the cost would be to set a region-wide dedicated revenue source to consolidate all the departments. Chief Hernandez said a method had been established to combine the SFPD and the TMFPD for a regionalized department with respect to governance and funding, but it was a plan that was quickly put together. If departments were regionalized, Councilmember Sferrazza inquired about the status for the area to receive federal funds in a consolidated department and how it affected the leveraging power for a regional fire system. Chief Hernandez explained that it increased the probability of receiving federal funds; however, there were very limited federal grants available for fire service.

Councilmember Sferrazza stated that four-man crews were discussed as being needed in urban areas. She asked if the recent Washoe and Caughlin Fires were described as urban areas. Chief Hernandez indicated those were wildland urban interface areas. Councilmember Sferrazza asked what the difference would have been in those fires if a four-man crew had not responded. Chief Hernandez replied there would have been less boots on the ground.

In response to Councilmember Hascheff, Chief Moore explained that the methodology described for consolidation was embraced by the Center for Fire Service Accreditation and, in that methodology structure, density and population density were reviewed. There were definitions within that accreditation model that defined an urban level of service, a suburban level of service, what was considered rural and frontier, and based on population and structure density. Chief Moore said that methodology was used for the industry's best practices to decide where the resources were best placed. Councilmember Hascheff asked if taxes were raised to provide the level of service to address the threat and risk. Chief Moore stated that could be one outcome. The other outcome could be to redesign fire service delivery to be more efficient. He clarified that the revenue stream was enhanced when the fire district was established. Councilmember Hascheff questioned the difference under the existing Interlocal Agreement. Chief Moore explained there were four things needed to put out a fire: water, access, tools and equipment and firefighters. The issue for the TMFPD was the balance between the need for equipment, the need to hire firefighters and keep all stations open and, as finances became tighter, potentially closing some stations in lieu of four-person engine companies. He said it would become a policy decision whether all the stations remained open with less than four-persons knowing that 80 percent of the time calls were for medical.

Councilmember Hascheff understood that the fire stations were kept open in the unincorporated areas and browned out in the City. He asked if that was correct. Pursuant to the Interlocal Agreement, Chief Hernandez said that was correct and noted that TMFPD stations were never browned out. The methodology utilized was based on call volume in the different districts and how to redistribute assets within the City to ensure that citizens were adequately protected and still maintain the terms of the

Interlocal Agreement. He commented that the model described by Chief Moore was a “text-book model” and the City was unique because there were “pockets” with large areas of undeveloped land and then there was a large concentration of homes intertwined with the wildland interface.

Commissioner Breternitz said the Interlocal Agreement required all TMFPD stations to remain open and asked if that was correct. Chief Hernandez reiterated that was correct. Commissioner Breternitz inquired about the funds to pay for the Reno firefighters who manned the TMFPD stations. Chief Hernandez indicated that those funds came from the City’s General Fund and the contribution the County made to the Reno firefighter budget. Commissioner Breternitz said it had been suggested that the operation of TMFPD stations by Reno personnel was not paid for by the County or by the TMFPD. Chief Hernandez stated he did not imply that. Commissioner Breternitz felt that the theory of the Interlocal Agreement was a great opportunity to utilize Reno firefighters to man TMFPD stations and that the Fire District paid for that labor. Chief Hernandez stated that was correct and felt that the Interlocal Agreement had worked well for both entities, saved a significant amount of money and, if the jurisdictions and boundaries were not an issue, it was a consolidated organization. Chief Hernandez remarked that the County contributed a portion of dollars to ensure that those stations remained open. Through the tenure of the Interlocal Agreement, he said the highest level of fire protection had been delivered to the periphery areas of the valley and to the core of the City.

Councilmember Aiazzi stated the issue was that TMFPD stations remained open because the Commissioners chose not to reduce the level of service; however, because of the formula used, when the City cut their level of service, the County received 28 percent of those savings. Chief Hernandez stated that was correct. Councilmember Aiazzi inquired about the money from the annexed areas. Chief Hernandez explained that money was given back to the County via an annexation credit. Councilmember Aiazzi commented the Interlocal Agreement stated the District was kept whole for any annexations by the City and, even though the City maintained the primary response to those areas, the City gave those funds back to the County via an annexation credit.

Commissioner Breternitz stated that the proposal received from the City included doing away with those annexation credits. Councilmember Aiazzi explained that those credits would have decreased over time.

Commissioner Humke asked if it was considered financially sustainable for the County to continue to operate under the Interlocal Agreement. Mary Walker, Walker and Associates, stated that she did not see the Interlocal Agreement as being financially sustainable.

Mayor Cashell asked what Ms. Walker considered financially sustainable and she replied when revenues equaled expenditures. She said by leaving the Interlocal Agreement, the District would save \$1.5 million a year by utilizing three-person staffing, would save about \$600,000 in Workers’ Compensation costs by going with an insurance

company rather than self-insurance with the City and, based upon the proposal from the City, there would be \$1 million worth of administrative costs saved along with the decrease in the salaries to have regional salary parity. She said those would provide \$3.4 million in annual savings to the TMFPD. Ms. Walker stated that the number one priority was keeping stations open.

Commissioner Jung asked if there was a financial plan for staffing water tenders and who decided if a water tender was needed on scene. Kurt Latipow, Fire Services Coordinator, explained that the current staffing model used by the SFPD authorized the Station Captain, at their discretion, to go ahead and bring the water tender on scene. He said 91 percent of the unincorporated area of the County was hydrated. Commissioner Jung asked if a study was conducted to know the ability of those hydrants and the breakdown of that 91 percent. Mr. Latipow replied that all of those hydrants were wet and would vary within range from 500 to 1,000 feet. Commissioner Jung said it was stated there were some hydrants that were not wet. Chief Moore clarified there were some rural areas far away from municipal sources that were dry. He explained that a municipal hydrant was a tank of potable water gravity fed through a fire hydrant that had water pressure available. In a dry hydrant, a vacuum was created where water was drawn from a static source.

Commissioner Jung asked how many calls were anticipated in the unincorporated County that would be either structure or wildland fires where a water tender would be needed or the staff plan to have a water tender available based on the assumptions. Chief Moore said the assumptions did not change much because there were water tenders, there was staff and there was the ability to leverage a volunteer response that also had water tenders. He said it was difficult to quantify and answer that question, but water tenders would respond when there was a fire in a rural area and would respond from the nearest station and then subsequent stations. Commissioner Jung asked if there was a staffing plan and projections in terms of the assumptions for savings. Chief Moore stated there would not be any additional costs because it already existed in the service model. Commissioner Jung requested a staffing plan and the scenarios.

Chief Moore commented that the totality of citizen input could be condensed into two statements: how much service level the citizens wanted; and, how much were they willing to pay. He said when those answers were known then a system could be designed that met those expectations.

Councilmember Sferrazza questioned how far the Transition Plan had progressed in standing up the new District, and would the County consider staying in the contract until the voters could be asked about regionalization. Commissioner Breternitz replied that the situation was due to the declining revenues and the County could not afford the current agreement. He said the County had set in process and was scheduled to stand-up the new fire department beginning July 1, 2012. He noted that could be afforded with the flexibility in staffing and a pay and benefit schedule, which was believed to be a long-term, sustainable scenario. Councilmember Sferrazza stated there was a tremendous expense in setting up a new organization; however, she believed that true regionalization

would take place. She suggested stepping back and consider dipping into the reserves, until the voters could be asked about regionalization.

Commissioner Humke commented that the BOFC did not make this decision lightly. He said a complicated Interlocal Agreement, which provided for no governance or voice by the County, was dissatisfactory and financially unsustainable. He said the schedule was to move forward and stand-up the new fire agency beginning July 1, 2012. In terms of regionalization, the operations needed to be perfected, and he felt that the District had hired the ideal person to perfect those operations for frontier, wildland, urban and suburban interface areas.

Commissioner Weber supported what the other Commissioners had stated and believed that the County was moving forward in the right direction; however, she felt there was still room for discussions.

Councilmember Aiazzi said it was obvious that a new agency would be established and the Commissioners had made it clear that their decisions were based on costs and sustainability. The question now was about automatic aid; however, it was not sustainable for the City to provide free services and believed it was fair for the City to discuss those fees. Councilmember Aiazzi said the BOFC was asking the City to provide primary aid to 28 percent of the County's area using taxable resources. However, with the deconsolidation, lay-off notices had been sent to 80 firefighters, and he did not know if the depth of resources was available to provide that automatic aid.

Councilmember Dortch stated that the City was ready to cover all their areas beginning July 1, 2012. The other question was what happened to the unincorporated islands. He said the County was collecting taxes from those unincorporated islands to provide fire services, but the County wanted the City to provide that service. He said it did not make sense for the County to collect taxes from those constituents and then ask the City to provide that service for free.

Commissioner Breternitz commented that the extension of automatic aid by some accounts cost \$5.5 million, which was from a set of mathematical formulas. He was baffled by the idea that providing services for the best public interest would cost \$5.5 million. The last study he read from 2010 said that the City responded to 950 calls in the Truckee Meadows Service Area (TMSA), but in that same period of time, the TMFPD responded to 1,350 calls in the City. Commissioner Breternitz said it was unfortunate that the County had to raise taxes in order to provide that coverage, but it was a situation that enabled the County to take care of the citizens living in those areas.

Councilmember Aiazzi remarked that this discussion should have occurred months ago. He said the reason for the disparity was due to the station in the north that was browned out; however, on July 1, 2012 that station would be stood up. He said the proposal from the County was to leave that station browned out and the County would respond, but the City could not legally do that based on an arbiter's rule and noted that information was sent to the County. Commissioner Breternitz indicated that the

arbitration was basically an element of an alien fire department or a non-local department co-housed with another. If in fact the theory was accurate, then the City could not have automatic aid with the City of Sparks. Councilmember Aiazzi replied not as a primary responder, but as automatic aid, which was another question.

Chief Hernandez said, as a consolidated fire department, they did have an automatic aid agreement with the City of Sparks for primary response, but both entities responded at the same time. He said the Silver Arbitration spoke to a different entity providing primary response into a geographical area, which the arbitrator ruled to be outside the scope of the contract.

In response to the call for public comment, Carole Billau voiced her concern over the proposed Plan B in the Transition Plan. She said she would support having an increased tax in order to keep the Interlocal Agreement together until regionalization occurred, but would not support a tax increase for a two-man crew in the Hidden Valley area.

Jeff Voskamp said all the problems the two entities were attempting to solve was due to the deconsolidation. He said a plan was completed with the Diamante Study, which was flushed. He said the deconsolidation would raise taxes and questioned how that was affordable or sustainable.

Marty Richards spoke on continuing automatic aid, which was a service to the community and a benefit to the public.

Steven Perez remarked the word that best suited what was attempting to be achieved was “expectations.” He said those expectations included putting the best, first or closest fire station or engine on scene. The public did not care what the decal read on the engine door. He said the difference between automatic aid and mutual aid was that automatic aid saved lives, while mutual aid saved properties.

William Steward read Article 2.1 and Article 2.3 of the Interlocal Agreement. He hoped that the ground work being laid could have a direct influence on future Commissions and Council members. He said there should be common decorum and the ability to provide a service that the citizens paid for and expected to have delivered.

Bob Ackerman stated that the City decided not to participate in the Diamante Study. He was amazed that the subject of deconsolidation had been discussed for two years and was still being discussed. He said the decision had been made and the separation would occur and now the decision had to be made about automatic aid.

Gene Cardella discussed insurance ratings and the proposed tax increase.

Chief Moore clarified that automatic aid also existed between the SFPD and the City. He stated that the closest unit would respond and there was a dual dispatch with the authority having jurisdiction so there would be two resources responding.

Councilmember Dortch said the City would be primary response to the unincorporated areas of the County, but the County was not saying they would be primary response to the City even though the County was collecting taxes to be their primary responder, and now the City was being asked to do that job at no charge. He felt that the County was using the City to balance their budget and receive the \$3.5 million in savings.

Mayor Cashell suggested moving forward with discussions even though the County would stand-up the new department. He clarified that the City would always provide mutual aid if the resources were available, but with the impending lay-offs, he could not guarantee that primary aid. He said the City was in favor of a regional plan for fire services, but felt it was a shame that the deconsolidation would occur.

Commissioner Jung believed if this issue was presented to the voters it would be a large victory since this had been discussed in public. She felt it was reckless to attempt to stand-up a new department by July 1, 2012 since there were many assumptions this was based upon and she was concerned for the community. Commissioner Jung said an insurance agent testified that the rates would rise in the unincorporated areas of the County, but was also likely that the entire region would have an increase in fire insurance rates. She said 12 years had been dedicated to consolidation with the Interlocal Agreement and Chief Moore stated it had taken 15 years in his former jurisdiction to complete a consolidation. She said the region was closer to regionalization due to the past 12 years. Commissioner Jung said because there would be a decrease in services, an increase in taxes, and an increase in insurance premiums, she did not support the deconsolidation.

Councilmember Aiazzi said the deconsolidation would move forward and time would tell what would happen. He congratulated the citizens of the SFPD because they complained to their Commissioners that they did not have enough fire service. He said the partnership was working well until the SFPD came into the District. He stated that the citizens of the SFPD created the controversy by convincing the Commission to raise TMFPD taxes and lower SFPD taxes. Councilmember Aiazzi said they were also able to convince the BOFC to build a new station in Arrowcreek using TMFPD monies. He said the SFPD would receive better services with the new station, fewer taxes than other citizens and felt they had done a great job. However, the SFPD citizens continued to submit stories about things they were not involved with and the public believed them. He said those citizens did a marvelous job of receiving something from other people to pay for their services.

Councilmember Hascheff stated that the Interlocal Agreement should be extended for approximately six months in order to allow staff to work on the proposal, and he believed that July 1, 2012 was an artificial deadline. He said the agreement could

be extended, with the status quo including automatic and mutual aid, while staff worked on a proposal. He said it did not make sense to break-up the fire service since there already was a consolidated fire service. He understood the sustainability of the revenues, but now that it was vetted and the County was looking at raising taxes to provide automatic aid to those other areas, why not extend the Interlocal Agreement.

Councilmember Sferrazza agreed. She said with the impending 80 lay-offs it was disingenuous for the City to state they would be the primary responder.

Councilmember Zadra said she was also concerned about the false deadline of July 1, 2012. She said citizens had spoken twice on the ballot and supported consolidated services. It would be unfortunate if the Legislature had to step in and solve the issues and allow a legislative body to make a decision for the local community.

Commissioner Breternitz agreed and felt there was not a member against regionalization. However, he said it was disappointing that the Council would leave this meeting without having a rationale discussion about regionalization. If the City was interested in discussions about regionalization, he suggested moving ahead with those discussions.

Councilmember Gustin said he was not convinced that the entire population wanted regionalization and, if that was presented on a ballot, it would give more validity. He said he was willing to have an open dialogue about regionalization and felt it was important. In regard to automatic aid, Councilmember Gustin stated the costs and the financial facts. He agreed in moving forward in a designated period of time to work out a revenue sharing component, but as an elected official he was obligated to ensure that the financial wherewithal for the City was held up and not spent on something that did not benefit the citizens. He would like to hear the financial facts of the costs for automatic aid.

Councilmember Hascheff felt it did not make sense to break up the fire department by July 1, 2012, and then discuss regionalization in the interim only to bring the department back together.

Councilmember Hascheff moved to direct City staff to meet with County staff for the purpose of extending the Interlocal Agreement, which would remain status quo for a period of six months and to have a consensus by July 1, 2012. Councilmember Sferrazza seconded the motion.

Councilmember Dortch said it was clear that the County would stand-up the new department on July 1, 2012, but he did not want to send staff on an expedition to extend the Interlocal Agreement if there was no appetite from the County for that to occur. If the County was not supportive of the motion, he did not want City staff spending time going in that direction and, at that point, the City would need to do what it needed to do to be ready on July 1, 2012.

Mayor Cashell agreed. He said the City would be ready on July 1, 2012 and said there was no alternative but to move forward.

Councilmember Zadra questioned if there would be more of an appetite from the County if there were independent representatives.

On call for the question for the City of Reno, the motion passed on a 7 to 0 vote.

Chairman Larkin said the Board took action with respect to Options 3 and 4 and directed those be forwarded to the City Council. He asked if that occurred and if any action had been taken from the Council for that proposal. John Berkich, Assistant County Manager, said those were submitted to the City, but he had no knowledge if action was taken. Andrew Clinger, Reno City Manager, indicated that those were on the upcoming agenda for the Council.

Commissioner Jung made a motion parallel to that of Councilmember Hascheff. She also moved to direct staff to pursue a six month interim fact-finding to ensure that the numbers were true and correct and for both bodies to participate in hiring an independent, outside auditor to make certain that the numbers were true and correct. Due to lack of a second, the motion failed.

Commissioner Humke stated he had no other motion to offer.

There was no further action on this item.

12-349 AGENDA ITEM 6

Agenda Subject: “Discussion and possible direction regarding scheduling of future meetings between the governmental entities.”

Chairman Larkin stated that a joint meeting was scheduled for June 4, 2012. Commissioner Breternitz suggested remaining with the process that was in place to set joint meetings.

There was no action taken or public comment on this item.

5:42 p.m. Commissioner Jung left the meeting.

12-350 AGENDA ITEM 7 – PUBLIC COMMENT

Agenda Subject: “Public Comment (three-minute time limit per person) – (Additional Public Comment on specific agenda items will be limited to three-minute time limit per person after each agenda item and must be related to the specific agenda item.) Comments are to be addressed to the Chair of the meeting and to the Reno City Council, the Washoe County Commission, Board of Fire

Commissioners for Sierra Fire Protection District and the Board of Fire Commissioners for Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District as a whole.”

Cathy Brandhorst addressed the Board and the Council.

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5:45 p.m. There being no further business to come before the Commission or the Council, the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:

AMY HARVEY, County Clerk
and Clerk of the Washoe County
Commission, Ex-Officio Clerk,
Sierra Fire Protection District, and
Truckee Meadows Fire
Protection District

ROBERT M. LARKIN, Chairman
Washoe County Commission,
Sierra Fire Protection District, and
Truckee Meadows Fire
Protection District

ATTEST:

LYNETTE R. JONES, City Clerk
City of Reno

ROBERT A. CASHELL, Mayor
City of Reno

*Minutes Prepared by Stacy Gonzales,
Washoe County Deputy Clerk*