



Meeks Bay Fire Protection District

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Steve Leighton, CHIEF

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

Meeks Bay Fire Protection District Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes
October 27, 2021

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

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting of the Meeks Bay Fire Protection District Board of Directors, for the month of October was called to order at 3:30pm by President Miller.

2. **Additions to Agenda/Approval of Agenda**

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

3. **Approval of Past Minutes**

It was moved by Vice President Kromydas and seconded by Director Lemke to approve the Board Minutes dated September 29, 2021, as presented. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

4. **Financial**

It was moved by Director Fielding and seconded by Director Lemke to accept the financial reports, items 4.A-E, as presented. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Due to timing purposes, item 6C.2 was discussed prior to item 5.

5. **Public Input**

There was none.

6. **Business Requiring Action**

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

There were no candidate applications submitted.

B. Resolution Proclaiming a Local Emergency, Ratifying the Proclamation of a State of Emergency by Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20, Issued March 4, 2020, and Authorizing Remote Teleconference Meetings of the Legislative Bodies of Meeks Bay Fire Protection District for the Period of October 28 - November 27, 2021, Pursuant to Brown Act Provisions

It was moved by Director Fielding and seconded by Vice President Kromydas to waive the reading and adopt Resolution 2021-08, allowing the district the option of holding the November meeting in a virtual setting. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.



C. Future Planning with North Tahoe Fire (moved following Financial)

1. Fiscal Study for Meeks Bay Fire and North Tahoe Fire Operations

This item was discussed, and determination was made, during item 6C.2.d, which took place prior to item 5.

2. LAFCo Discussion

President Miller introduced Erica Sanchez who is the Interim Executive Officer for El Dorado County LAFCo (ED-LAFCo).

a. Determination of Zero Sphere

She explained the Municipal Services Review (MSR) and Sphere of Influence (SOI) studies currently being prepared. As part of the MSR, one of the recommendations will be to move forward with a sphere update of zero sphere influence, based on the knowledge that Meeks Bay and North Tahoe are moving towards annexation. This is the precursor towards a dissolution. The zero sphere doesn't change anything about current jurisdictional boundaries, nor does it push the district closer to a dissolution. Making this change as a part of the MSR process will ultimately save the district in terms of time and cost.

It was moved by Director Fielding and seconded by Vice President Kromydas to support El Dorado LAFCo's preliminary recommendation to proceed with designating Meeks Bay Fire as a zero sphere of influence in the draft MSR. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

b. Determining the Lead LAFCo Agency

Placer LAFCo (P-LAFCo) would typically have jurisdiction over this annexation because North Tahoe Fire's boundary has a much larger assessed valuation than Meeks Bay Fire. However, approximately one year ago, at Meeks Bay Fire's request, ED-LAFCo requested, and P-LAFCo agreed to transfer jurisdiction to process the annexation to ED-LAFCo. Ms. Sanchez explained that she is currently the interim Executive Officer, and ED-LAFCo is conducting an open recruitment for the Executive Officer position. Additionally, there is no other staff who can work on this which could create a significant delay in completing the annexation process. She added that she would fully support returning the jurisdiction to P-LAFCo.

The LAFCo fees of a 2014 annexation in El Dorado County (El Dorado Hills Fire annexing Latrobe Fire) had a final LAFCo cost of approximately \$40,000. The costs are based on staff time and materials (postage for mailings).

Michelle McIntyer was recently hired by Placer LAFCo, and had previously worked for Solano LAFCo where she worked on several consolidation and reorganization processes. Whether or not P-LAFCo is the lead agency, both LAFCo's will be involved and working together.

When discussing how LAFCo costs were shared, between districts, Ms. Sanchez explained that the split was determined by the two districts. However, part of the



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intent of becoming one district is that all money is combined and there is only one budget.

There are two separate actions involved with reorganizing. There is the dissolution of Meeks Bay Fire and the annexation of Meeks Bay Fire territory into North Tahoe Fire. Because it is a reorganization, the two LAFCo's would request that the districts decide which will be billed. If the districts want to have a separate agreement for payment, that can be done between them.

Regardless of which LAFCo takes the lead, they will both be working closely together to coordinate community meetings and outreach. LAFCo will be sending out notices and the community should be informed, prior to receiving the notices, of what is happening to the district. There should also be a meeting after the notices are sent to give the community an opportunity to ask questions.

When the transfer of jurisdiction initially took place, giving ED-LAFCo the lead, the process was very clean and would be defensible if necessary. However, Ms. Sanchez wanted to be transparent, and make sure the board is aware that ED-LAFCo will be going through some transitions that could increase the amount of time for the process to be completed. Staffing is not what is typical which will impact the projects that come before them in the next six months to a year.

It was moved by Director Fielding and seconded by Vice President Kromydas to transfer jurisdiction of the LAFCo process back to Placer LAFCo. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

c. Discussion Regarding Costs Associated with the LAFCo Process

Sue Hennike Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and liaison to fire districts explained that the purpose of her office is to support district reorganization, when requested. They do not focus on driving or forcing the process.

They have identified one way to support the process is to financially assist with some of the one-time costs associated with the process (i.e. financial studies, LAFCo costs, etc.). This cost support is new. If the district does apply for financial assistance from the county, it would be the first to make a request. Ms. Hennike recommended making the request as early as possible and inform the county what is being considered, including the associated costs. This way, the Board of Supervisors would have adequate time to review the request and make a determination. This would then give the district adequate information prior to moving forward with a reorganization. The CAO's office is happy to bring recommendations to the Board of Supervisors to support in providing financial assistance.

President Miller informed Ms. Hennike that Chief Leighton was contacted by Placer County Supervisor Cindy Gustafson who expressed a desire to meet with both board presidents, Chief Leighton and El Dorado County Supervisor Sue Novasel to discuss what kind of financial support each county would be willing to provide.



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Ms. Hennike was aware of the meeting requested by Supervisor Gustafson, but had not heard about the discussion of financial support. She does not believe a request of up to \$100,000 would be unreasonable to assist with the costs of a fiscal analysis and LAFCo fees, and would be seriously considered by El Dorado County BOS.

When Meeks Bay Fire ceases to exist, and North Tahoe Fire brings over all of the Tax Rate Areas (TRAs are groups of parcels and are used to allocate property taxes and direct charges) within Meeks Bay. The reorganization process provides an opportunity to renegotiate some of the shares of the increment in the area that is being annexed. However, the county will make the final decision.

Division Chief McNamara explained that ultimately there must be a financial need for there to be an Ad Valorem tax share, which is based on the plan for services.

Ms. Hennike confirmed that any type of reorganization between MBF and NTF would not affect the ambulance tax currently being paid by MBF property owners to El Dorado County. However, she is not able to speak on the benefit assessments or special taxes because they are district-specific and is not familiar with the circumstances.

President Miller explained that the dollar amount levied on MBF property owners and the dollar amount levied on NTF property owners is a difference of approximately \$20.

Division Chief McNamara further explained that, if the districts maintain the current intent of an “annexation,” then the benefit assessments and special taxes would remain intact (supported by Government Code and Tax and Revenue Code). However, if the districts “consolidate,” that has the potential to cause problems with the special taxes and benefit assessments.

Although a name change can take place as a part of the LAFCo process, Division Chief McNamara mentioned that this should be done with caution in order to not injure any contracts that NTF has in place.

d. Discussion on the ESCI Study in Combination with Current Financials Being Utilized as per the Government Code “Plan for Services”

The ESCI study has been accepted by both LAFCo’s as a valid document for proceeding with annexation. LAFCo will accept internal financial updates to the Plan For Services, utilizing budgets and audits for both districts.

Director Fielding stated that he does not believe there would be anything in a new study that would change his decision whether annexation is appropriate; his concern at the last meeting was based on there being old financials and the proposed studies were to identify if there would be a need for additional special assessments. After discussions with several NTF staff members and NTF Board President Baffone, he is now comfortable moving forward with the ESCI study and the internal, updated financials.



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Both LAFCo agencies will accept the ESCI study, with internally updated financial information. If additional information is required, they would make that request. They would not reject the application based on the fact that it is not a whole new study.

Staff time to update the financial information would be minimal. The budgets have already been prepared, and the audited financials have been for MBF through fiscal year 2020/2021 (draft), and NTF's audit for fiscal year 2020/2021 is scheduled to begin next week. It will just be a matter of compiling the information. Director Eason believes the financial information can be compiled and board-approved by the end of January.

The ED-LAFCo draft MSR is still not available for public review, which is typically a 30-day comment period. Once LAFCo adopts the final MSR, there is then the second action to update the SOI to a Zero Sphere.

The P-LAFCo already has an MSR that recommends including MBF into the NTF district, but did not update their SOI to include MBF. There will need to be the additional step to include MBF in the NTF SOI. Once ED-LAFCo adopts a Zero Sphere for MBF, then P-LAFCo can adopt a sphere for NTF that includes MBF. The SOI updates are LAFCo actions and do not require applications or resolutions from the districts.

It was moved by Vice President Kromydas and seconded by Director Fielding to move forward using the ESCI study with internal financial analysis to be prepared by North Tahoe Fire staff. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Director Fielding requested, at a future date, to receive a timeline of the annexation process. Ms. McIntyre will work with Ms. Sanchez to create a timeline. They will also work to transfer jurisdiction from ED-LAFCo to P-LAFCo.

Director Fielding requested the shared LAFCo cost be discussed at a future meeting.

Chief Leighton thanked Michelle McIntyre, Sue Hennike and Erica Sanchez for their attendance and sharing their knowledge.



D. Next Board Meeting Dates

The next meetings of the Board of Directors will be November 17th (if needed), and December 8, 2021.

7. Chief's Reports

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

- Captain Brent Armstrong is the new Fire Marshall
- Described the gas leak in Kings Beach, which closed Hwy 28, as being caused by a contractor puncturing an 8" gas line at Agatam and North Lake Blvd
- PIO Holland explained how the various emergency alerting systems work. Notifications are only sent to registered people in the impacted area.
- Congratulated Office Manager Crawford on her upcoming retirement
- Happy birthday to President Miller
- Cal Fire ended burn bans; burn permits are still required in El Dorado County
- warming fires are still not allowed at vacation home rentals (VHR)
- Chipping is still happening
- Cal Fire will be reviewing subdivisions and determining if there are two points of egress

8. Information Items

- Report from Sustainable Community Advocates
- President Miller thanked Office Manager Crawford for her years of service
- President Miller thanked Chief McNamara for his assistance.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved by Vice President Kromydas and seconded by Director Lemke to adjourn the meeting of the Board of Directors at 5:50pm

Respectfully submitted,
Shawn R. Crawford
Clerk of the Board

Staff Attendees:

Fire Chief Steve Leighton
Division Chief Steve McNamara
Division Chief Alan Whisler
Director of Finance Kim Eason
Clerk of the Board Shawn Crawford
District Clerk Kelly Martin
PIO Erin Holland
Forest Fuels Coordinator Eric Horntvedt
Battalion Chief Naman Beatie
Fire Marshal Brent Armstrong
Captain Jamie Sheppard
Crews from Stations 52, 53 and 67

Additional Attendees:

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Sue Hennike (El Dorado County)
Executive Officer Michelle McIntyre (P-LAFCo)
Interim Executive Officer Erica Sanchez (ED-LAFCo)
Resident Ellie Beals