



North Tahoe and Meeks Bay Fire Protection Districts



Date: February 9, 2022
To: Meeks Bay Fire Board of Directors
From: Steve Leighton, Fire Chief
Subject: February 2022

I want to open this report on behalf of all members of our organization by saying thank you for your hard work and dedication to providing excellent service to our customers. As your Fire Chief, I realize that we may not be perfect in everything we do, but I have full faith and confidence in our organization to deliver excellent service to all we encounter.

2021 left us with record snowfall only for 2022 to ring in as the third driest January on record in Tahoe. Fortunately, we remain at 101% of average snowpack, while our partner agencies continue conducting pile burns to reduce hazardous fuels while the weather is cooperating. 2022 continues to keep our staff busy with a near-record January for call volume with 280 calls for service; second only to the storms that hit in January 2017.

As you know, our staff is of utmost important to me and I'm always proud to report on their successes. I'm happy to have Captain Farrell back on staff and leading a fire company. He did an outstanding job in the academy and learned many things to assist us in our effort in recruiting quality Firefighter/Paramedics. Our new recruit, Sarah Kertesz, completed the fire academy in an excellent fashion and has joined "B" shift under the tutelage and mentorship of Battalion Chief Naman Beatie. Our lateral and entry level recruitments went quite well last week. We had an impressive and diverse applicant pool and held interviews with nine candidates for the four vacancies we currently have. Staff did an outstanding job with the assessment center, skills evaluation, and interview process. It is my philosophy that members from all ranks participate in the hiring process, and I believe we accomplished that goal. With input from staff, I will decide soon who will be the new firefighter/paramedics riding on our engines and ambulances. I'm also happy to announce our new Facilities Coordinator. Bjorn Beckman is on board with us and fully engaged with his new position. Bjorn comes to us with many years of construction experience, and I'm confident he will be a good fit for our organization.

We continue to experience dry conditions that are warmer than normal. In checking the future weather forecast, unwontedly it appears that no storms are in our immediately future. With that said, I'm sad to report that a Truckee family lost a loved one during an outing to ice skate on Stampede Reservoir. Several people fell through the ice, and one person could not be rescued. I want to remind the public (and we have sent out a press release) to be aware of changing conditions due to our unusual warming weather conditions. Our message is to use caution while performing backcountry activities as conditions may be unsafe and change rapidly. We are fortunate to have the Tahoe Truckee Rescue Team (TTRT) to assist that respond with members from North Tahoe Fire during incidents like these.

On another note, the Tahoe Douglas fire boat was severely damaged in the recent storms and was a complete loss. They are working through replacement with their insurance company. In talking to their Fire Chief, the best-case scenario is that it will be late this fall for a replacement to be on the water. This is a big hit to the Basin's ability to use a fire boat. We will now have to rely on our other friends and neighbors to assist us with water-related emergencies.

Staff continues to stay busy with grant applications, and so far this year, we've submitted an Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) to FEMA for a variety of needs. These requests include new extrication equipment, a new air compressor for the 30-year-old unit at Station 51, and a wellness request for cancer screenings for staff for a total of \$177,537.05. We also submitted a SAFER grant to FEMA that would fund three firefighter position with no match for three years for a total of \$1,444,986.75. Finally, and most recently, we submitted a California Climate Investments Fire Prevention Grant to reduce hazardous fuels in the Alpine Meadows community. If awarded, this grant will run for three years with a total funding of \$836,313. The Alpine Meadows community has agreed to a \$185,000 match if this grant is awarded. I'm hopeful and optimistic that these grants will be funded to assist us in our effort to provide excellent service to our constituents while minimizing the impact to our budget.

Meetings and Assignments:

- North Tahoe, Meeks Bay, and Alpine Meadows Board Meetings
- Eastern Joint Powers Authority (JPA) Chiefs Meeting
- Lake Tahoe Regional Fire Chiefs Association Meeting
- Sierra Front Wildfire Cooperators Meeting
- Executive and Command Staff Meetings
- Labor Management L3729 Meeting
- Forest Fuels Transition Meeting
- CAL PERS Liability Seminar
- Eldorado County Fire Chiefs Meeting
- Fire Academy Graduation
- Short Term Rental Meeting (Placer County)
- Eldorado County Board of Supervisors Meeting
- Placer County Board of Supervisors Meeting
- Homewood Pre-Development Meeting
- Eldorado County LAFCO Meeting
- Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team Multi-Agency Coordination Meeting
- Tahoe Regional Dispatch Meeting
- Breakfast Club Meeting
- SAFER and Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) Grant Meeting
- Caldor Fire After Action Review Meeting
- NTF/MB Reorganization Meeting with Placer County
- Tahoe City Public Utility District CEO Meeting
- Lateral and Entry Level Firefighter/Paramedic Interviews
- New Facilities Coordinator Orientation Meeting
- Agency Representative (for two retired fire service funerals)

MBFPD RESPONSE CALLS - MONTHLY COMPARISON

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
2022	24											
2021	12	31	18	17	15	38	52	44	19	27	20	30
2020	23	12	9	9	14	30	54	50	28	22	16	11
2019												23

