

## Fire Chief Twelve-Month Self-Assessment

Fire Chief: Tim McHargue

Assessment Period: October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026

This self-assessment mirrors the Board evaluation framework and provides context regarding progress, challenges, accomplishments, and leadership focus during the first twelve months of service.

### Introduction:

Sustainability continues to serve as the guiding principle for my leadership of the District under the direction of the Fire Board. During my first year, the primary objective has been to move the organization from assessment and stabilization toward deliberate, sustainable improvement. This work has focused on strengthening financial accountability, modernizing governance practices, improving labor and employee relations, addressing fleet and facility needs, increasing regional engagement, preparing for major development impacts, and establishing a clearer organizational identity. The District still has significant work ahead, but the first year has produced measurable progress and a stronger foundation for long-term success.

### **1. Organizational Sustainability and Financial Resilience**

Self-Assessment: As Expected

#### Organizational Sustainability

During the first year, the District made meaningful progress in several areas identified in my six-month assessment as critical to organizational sustainability. The emphasis has remained on creating predictable systems, addressing deferred needs, and making decisions that can be supported over the long term rather than relying on short-term solutions.

- **Equipment:** The Fire Board approved the purchase of a new Type-I fire engine with an anticipated build time of approximately 36 months. Two new Braun ambulances are scheduled for delivery in October 2026. The District also began the process of surplus engines and water tenders that are beyond their useful service lives, purchased a replacement Fire Chief command vehicle, and ordered a new Battalion Chief vehicle.
- **Personnel:** The District hired five new firefighters, completed employee evaluations for every employee, and continued work on recruitment, retention, succession planning, and competitive compensation. The Fire Board approved a 3% salary increase for all personnel.

- **Governance and Policy:** Policy updates have progressed more slowly than originally anticipated but continue to move forward. The District remains focused on replacing informal practices with written policy, agreements, and clearly defined expectations.
- **Financial Practices:** The District strengthened accounting processes, improved monthly reconciliation, transitioned to a new auditing firm, and retained a consultant to document and incorporate historical audit entries into the accounting system.
- **Capital and Facilities:** The FY27/28 budget included funding for expansion of District Headquarters into Suite 104 to improve administrative efficiency and provide room for organizational growth. The Board also approved surplus District real estate for sale.
- **Development Impacts:** The District continued active engagement with Lyon County and developers regarding large-scale data center development and other significant projects to ensure fire and EMS impacts are identified and appropriately mitigated.
- **Organizational Direction:** District personnel collaboratively created new Mission, Vision, and Core Values, providing a clearer foundation for future strategic planning and organizational decision-making.
- **Strategic Planning:** At the direction of the Fire Board, formal strategic planning has been deferred until 2027, with the current plan to begin the process in April 2027.

### Financial Resilience

Financial resilience has been one of the most significant areas of progress during the first year. The District hired a new auditing firm that has been organized, professional, responsive, and proactive throughout the transition. A consultant was also hired to document and incorporate historical audit entries into the District accounting system. This work represents a significant milestone in improving the accuracy and completeness of the District's financial records.

The Business Manager has continued to strengthen internal controls by reconciling the District accounting system to monthly financial reports. These practices improve financial accuracy, support transparency, and help maintain audit readiness throughout the year. The District also completed the FY26/27 budget, which was adopted by the Fire Board.

Labor costs and long-term compensation remain important components of financial sustainability. The District completed negotiations with Local 4728 for a one-year Collective Bargaining Agreement and began negotiations with the Fire Chiefs Association for its first CBA. The one-year approach continues to provide the District with flexibility while recurring revenues and long-term obligations become better understood.

Overall, I believe the District has made substantial progress in moving from limited financial visibility toward a more disciplined and transparent financial management system. Continued attention to recurring revenues, capital replacement, post-employment obligations, labor costs, and development-related service demands will remain necessary.

## **2. Public Trust, Transparency, and Fiscal Stewardship**

Self-Assessment: As Expected

### Public Trust

The District has continued the community engagement practices established during the first six months. Chief Officers and other District representatives regularly attend Citizen Advisory Board meetings throughout the District, and we continue to engage Lyon County officials, community organizations, residents, and partner agencies. This presence has improved communication and provides the public with more direct access to District leadership.

The District has also worked to increase public recognition and organizational identity. New District challenge coins were approved, and the District has continued to recognize citizens and partner organizations for actions that support public safety and the community.

### Transparency

Monthly public operational reporting, Board agenda materials, supporting reports, and the redesigned District website continue to improve public access to information. Flash Reports and other timely communications are used to provide the Fire Board, County officials, cooperators, and other stakeholders with situational awareness following significant incidents.

### Fiscal Stewardship

Fiscal stewardship has advanced through improved accounting controls, monthly reconciliation, a new auditing relationship, incorporation of historical accounting entries, and a more structured budget process. The adopted FY26/27 budget reflects both current operational requirements and longer-term capital needs.

The District has also taken action regarding underutilized or aging assets. The Board approved surplus District real estate for sale and the District began the process of surplusizing apparatus that is beyond its service life. These actions are intended to reduce unnecessary liabilities and redirect resources toward assets that support current service delivery.

The District has applied for an Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) to support the purchase of a new water tender. The application addresses the District's large rural response area, significant areas without municipal hydrant infrastructure, and the age, condition, reliability, and capacity of the existing water tender fleet. If awarded, the grant would help address an identified apparatus and rural water-supply need while reducing the financial burden on District taxpayers.

Station 38 remains an important strategic asset. The District obtained a zoning change allowing the site to function as a general aviation airport and continued outreach to air ambulance providers. The initial effort with REACH was unsuccessful, and outreach is continuing with another provider. The goal remains to identify a partnership that improves emergency medical access while making responsible use of District assets.

### **3. Internal and External Stakeholder Engagement**

Self-Assessment: As Expected

#### Internal Stakeholder Engagement

Internal engagement remained a priority throughout the first year. Monthly Labor Management meetings have continued, along with semi-weekly Executive Staff meetings. These recurring meetings provide predictable forums to identify concerns, assign responsibilities, improve communication, and address issues before they become larger organizational problems.

I met with personnel at every fire station and on all three shifts for lunch and discussion. Most of these meetings lasted two hours or more and provided valuable opportunities to hear directly from employees regarding District operations, organizational culture, equipment, staffing, training, and leadership expectations.

Every District employee received an evaluation during the year. This eliminated a significant backlog in which some employees had not received a formal evaluation for several years and reestablished the expectation that performance feedback and accountability are routine responsibilities of supervision.

The District also held a successful employee holiday party in December 2025. While not an operational accomplishment, events that create positive interaction among employees and families contribute to organizational connection and culture.

I have responded on several occasions both day and night on emergency incidents including fires, medical aids, and traffic collisions.

#### External Stakeholder Engagement

Regional and County relationships have continued to strengthen. I have maintained regular engagement with Lyon County leadership, the Sheriff's Office, neighboring fire chiefs, regional fire service associations, Citizen Advisory Boards, and other governmental partners. Monthly fire chief lunches continue to provide an informal but productive forum for discussing regional issues and mutual interests.

The District completed a Lahontan Lake agreement with the Lyon County Sheriff's Office and continued coordination with Lyon County regarding public information. These efforts clarify roles, improve interagency coordination, and strengthen relationships before significant incidents occur.

Development-related engagement expanded substantially during the second half of the year. I met with the County Manager regarding data centers, their impacts on fire and EMS service delivery, and potential recommendations for a County ordinance addressing fire district needs. I also spoke before the Lyon County Commissioners regarding data center impacts and continued outreach to Microsoft regarding its proposed development.

The Fire Marshal has also engaged the Legacy 49 development group regarding a proposed project of approximately 2,000 homes, a hotel, and an RV park near the golf course. A future developer agreement may provide an opportunity to support fire station improvements or replacement as the area develops.

#### **4. Operational Assessment, Compliance, and Performance Benchmarking**

Self-Assessment: As Expected

##### Operational Assessment

During the first year, operational assessment progressed from initial observation toward specific organizational actions. Semi-weekly Executive Staff meetings, monthly Staff Meetings, written meeting notes, assigned deliverables, and routine communication have created greater consistency in administrative oversight and organizational direction.

Fleet assessment resulted in several concrete actions. The Fire Board approved a new Type-I engine, two new Braun ambulances are scheduled for delivery in October 2026, a replacement Fire Chief command vehicle was purchased, a new Battalion Chief vehicle was ordered, and the District began identifying engines and water tenders for surplus because they are beyond their service lives. These actions are the beginning of a more deliberate long-term fleet replacement strategy.

The Fuels Program was assessed and has undergone transition during the year. The objective remains to maintain a stable and effective fuels reduction program while evaluating contracts, funding sources, staffing, and opportunities to diversify work.

The Tactical EMS program was assessed in coordination with District personnel and the Lyon County Sheriff's Office. Future planning is focused on developing a clearer administrative and operational framework that appropriately addresses employee status, compensation, workers' compensation, liability, and District support.

The District also successfully navigated changes to workers' compensation insurance and secured liability insurance after the prior coverage was cancelled. Both issues required significant administrative attention and were essential to maintaining uninterrupted organizational protection and compliance.

### Compliance

The first-year emphasis on replacing informal understandings with written, predictable direction remains appropriate. The District completed a one-year CBA with Local 4728 and began negotiations with the Fire Chiefs Association for its first CBA. These formal agreements help reduce ambiguity and establish clear expectations for employees and the District.

Policy modernization remains an unfinished area of work. Progress has slowed due to competing organizational priorities and the amount of staff time required for thoughtful policy review. However, the work continues, and the goal remains to ensure District policies are legally compliant, operationally practical, consistent with collective bargaining obligations, and reflective of industry best practices.

The use of after-action processes, Blue Sheets, Flash Reports, and regional information sharing continues to support organizational learning and High Reliability Organization principles. The intent is to normalize the identification of lessons learned and share consequential information quickly and professionally.

### Performance Benchmarking

Performance benchmarking remains an area for continued development. Improvements in data collection and reporting are necessary before the District can establish reliable baseline and benchmark performance measures. Monthly public reporting has improved awareness of call volume and activity, but future work should expand into response performance, unit utilization, workload, reliability, and service demand by geographic area.

## **5. Alignment of Services with Community Risk and Legal Requirements**

Self-Assessment:      As Expected

### Alignment of Services with Community Risk

The need to align service delivery with community risk has become more significant as Lyon County experiences substantial proposed development. Data centers, electrical infrastructure, large residential projects, and continued population growth have the potential to materially change the District's risk profile and resource requirements.

The District has actively participated in discussions regarding these developments rather than waiting until projects are completed. Meetings with the County Manager, presentations

to the County Commissioners, outreach to Microsoft, and Fire Marshal engagement with the Legacy 49 project are intended to identify fire and EMS impacts early and pursue appropriate mitigation through development agreements, ordinance requirements, station improvements, apparatus, staffing, or other sustainable funding mechanisms.

A formal Standards of Cover/Standards of Care analysis remains a future need. Such a process would provide objective data regarding community risk, response performance, station locations, staffing, apparatus deployment, workload, and future resource requirements. This work should ultimately be coordinated with the District's strategic planning process.

#### Legal Requirements

Throughout the year, District operations have continued to be evaluated within Nevada statutory, regulatory, labor, insurance, financial, and governance requirements. Particular attention has been given to collective bargaining, open meeting practices, financial accountability, insurance coverage, interagency agreements, property transactions, and the replacement of informal practices with written direction.

The historic Silver City Fire Station transition from Lyon County to the District was completed during the year. The District also obtained approval to surplus District real estate and completed the Station 38 zoning change. Each of these actions required coordination with outside agencies and attention to the District's legal and governance responsibilities.

### **6. Strategic Planning Preparation and Organizational Direction**

Self-Assessment: As Expected

#### Strategic Planning

Strategic planning remained an important objective during the first year; however, the Fire Board directed that the formal process be deferred until 2027. I support that direction. The additional time will allow the District to enter the process with a better understanding of its finances, fleet, staffing, development pressures, organizational culture, and operational needs. The current plan is to begin formal strategic planning in April 2027.

Although the formal strategic plan has been deferred, foundational strategic work has continued. District personnel collaboratively developed a new Mission, Vision, and Core Values. This process provided an opportunity for employees to help define who we are, how we intend to serve, and the organizational values expected to guide decisions and behavior.

#### Organizational Direction

The first year has moved the District toward a more structured and predictable operating environment. Recurring Executive Staff, Staff, and Labor Management meetings; employee evaluations; improved financial controls; written agreements; fleet planning; development

engagement; and clearer organizational identity all contribute to a stronger management system.

My leadership focus continues to be sustainability: a financially responsible organization with reliable equipment, a stable and supported workforce, professional leadership, clear policies, strong regional relationships, and service levels aligned with the risks and expectations of the community. The accomplishments of the first year are important, but they should be viewed as foundational steps rather than completion of the work.

## **Overall Self-Assessment Summary**

### Key Accomplishments:

Key accomplishments during the first twelve months include strengthening District financial reporting and internal controls; completing the FY26/27 budget; hiring five firefighters; completing evaluations for every employee; negotiating a one-year CBA with Local 4728 and beginning the Fire Chiefs Association's first CBA; obtaining approval for a new Type-I engine and preparing for delivery of two new ambulances; beginning the surplus of aging apparatus and District real estate; collaboratively establishing new Mission, Vision, and Core Values; continuing monthly labor and regional fire chief meetings; engaging employees at every station and on all three shifts; completing the Silver City Fire Station transition; advancing Station 38 aviation and air ambulance opportunities; navigating workers' compensation and liability insurance changes; and significantly increasing the District's engagement in major development planning.

### Key Challenges and Lessons Learned:

The first year reinforced that meaningful organizational change requires sequencing and patience. Policy modernization has progressed more slowly than desired because of competing priorities and the need for careful labor, legal, and operational review. Fleet replacement will require a multi-year commitment because of the age of existing apparatus, cost of replacement, and long manufacturing timelines. Major development may create service demands faster than traditional revenue can support, making early engagement with Lyon County and developers essential. The year also reinforced the importance of predictable communication, written agreements, routine employee feedback, and disciplined financial practices as the foundation for organizational trust.

### Focus Areas for the Next Twelve Months:

#### **1. Strategic Planning and Organizational Direction**

Prepare for and begin the formal strategic planning process in April 2027, incorporating employee, Board, community, labor, and regional stakeholder input and using the new Mission, Vision, and Core Values as the foundation for the District's long-term direction.

#### **2. Financial Sustainability and Capital Planning**



Continue strengthening financial controls and audit readiness while developing multi-year approaches for fleet replacement, facilities, staffing, post-employment obligations, and other recurring costs. Continue distinguishing sustainable recurring revenue from one-time funding.

3. Development Impact and Community Risk

Continue active participation with Lyon County and developers regarding data centers, large residential projects, and other growth. Pursue legally supportable mitigation strategies that ensure existing taxpayers are not required to subsidize new development-related fire and EMS demands.

4. Policy Modernization and Labor Relations

Continue systematic policy updates, complete negotiations with the Fire Chiefs Association, maintain productive Labor Management meetings, and further eliminate informal practices that create ambiguity or organizational risk.

5. Fleet, Facilities, and Operational Performance

Receive and place the new ambulances into service, continue planning for the new Type-I engine, responsibly surplus obsolete apparatus, evaluate facility needs, and improve operational data collection so that future resource decisions can be supported by measurable performance information.

6. Workforce and Leadership Development

Continue building supervisory and leadership capacity through clear expectations, routine evaluations, mentoring, professional development, succession planning, and High Reliability Organization principles.

Summary:

The first twelve months of service have focused on stabilizing the organization, building relationships, improving financial and administrative systems, addressing deferred operational needs, and positioning the District for future growth. Significant progress has been made, particularly in financial accountability, labor relations, employee engagement, fleet planning, organizational identity, and external stakeholder engagement. At the same time, several major initiatives—including policy modernization, performance benchmarking, long-term fleet replacement, development mitigation, and formal strategic planning will require sustained attention over multiple years.

On a personal note, my wife and I continue to adjust well to our living situation between Nevada and California. I appreciate the Board's accommodation of my

monthly travel to spend time with her. We have generally been able to see each other approximately every two weeks, and the arrangement has worked well while allowing me to remain fully engaged in my responsibilities to the District. I am grateful for the Board's understanding and support.

I appreciate the opportunity to serve the Fire Board, the personnel of Central Lyon County Fire Protection District, and the communities we protect. I remain committed to building a sustainable, transparent, professional, and high-performing organization that is prepared to meet both today's responsibilities and the District's future challenges.