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HAWAI'I COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION

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REGULAR SESSION - MINUTES February 13, 2008 Aupuni Center Conference Room

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Bowles at 10:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

John Bertsch
Stephen Bowles, Vice-Chair
Neil Brazier
Karen Maedo
Henry Pomroy, Jr.
Bill Rosehill

Excused: James Browne
Karen Kudlo
Wil Okabe, Chair

A quorum was present.

ALSO PRESENT:

Anapesi Bloomfield
Bill Brillhante, Deputy Corporation Counsel
Richard Fong
Laurie Kaneta
Darryl Oliveira, Fire Chief
Noni Sanford

Tom Brandt
Kaycie Carter
Michael Gahan
Glen Honda, Deputy Fire Chief
Noel Proctor

Hawai'i County is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

Commissioners: John Bertsch, Stephen Bowles, Neil Brazier, James Browne,
Karen Kudlo, Karen Maedo, Wil Okabe, Henry Pomroy, Jr., Bill Rosehill

STATEMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS (Open to the Public)

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Maedo made a motion to approve the January 9, 2008, regular session minutes with a correction to Mr. Wayne Kanemoto’s name. His name is spelled Kanimoto rather than Kanemoto. Also, Vice-Chair Bowles requested that the minutes reflect that the election of officers was not unanimous because Commissioner Bertsch was not present. The minutes should reflect that the vote was unanimous by the members that were present. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rosehill and unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Maedo moved to accept communication number 08-001. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pomroy and unanimously carried. Discussion: Chief Oliveira advised the commission that communication number 08-01 was sent directly to the Fire Commission. He assured the commission that the department will be contacting the individual and following up on the matter.

Vice-Chair Bowles recommended that executive session be moved to the end of the agenda.

The Hawai'i County Fire Commission agreed.

CHIEF’S REPORT

- Introduction of 37th Fire Fighter Recruit Class.

Eddie Abe	Randy Castro
Micah Chew-Marumoto	Helaku Hedlund
Brysen Heidenfeldt	Marcus Helm
Paul Kekela, Jr.	James Kupahu
John Martin	Aaron Mitchell
Adam Naehu	Andrew Penny
Yurik Resetnikov	Tay Soares, Jr.
Jeremy Tekurio	Kyle Teves
Kyle Vares	Damien Joseph Wengler-loane

- Introduction of newly hired Fire Radio Dispatchers Anapesi Bloomfield and Noel Proctor.

The Fire Commission welcomed them.

Budget

- FY 2008/09 Budget: Meeting held on January 7, 2008, with the Department of Finance in order to present the program and supplemental budgets. The budgets are currently being reviewed and considered. The approved items will be presented to the County Council on April 1, 2008, at 1:30 p.m. In the past, Commissioner Bowles participated in the budget process, and the Fire Department appreciates and welcomes his involvement. Commissioner Bowles and Chief Oliveira agreed to meet to discuss the budget.

Chief Oliveira stated that he would distribute a handout featuring the component of the proposed and revised strategic plan. The strategic plan needs to be viewed as an important communication, not only for the commission to evaluate the performance of the Fire Chief, but also to set a road map for the members of the Fire Department. It is necessary for the personnel to be aware of and to emphasize the goals and objectives for 2008.

Alternative Funding and Grants

- FEMA FY 2007 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: Received official award notification on February 8 for the total grant award of approximately \$300,000 to purchase and implement Video Teleconferencing System throughout the department. The VTS will allow the department to deliver internal training and expand on its Fire Science courses; provide continuous information on disaster preparedness, and offer staff meetings, and strategic planning meetings to its personnel. Also, televising the Fire Commission meetings to the stations is being considered.
- State Department of Transportation-Safe Highways Grant: Will be submitting grant application for OSHA-required reflective vests for paid and volunteer personnel. Statistically, there are a large number of emergency responder fatalities. This grant will allow safety associated with highway operations.

Capital Improvement Projects

- Makalei Fire Station: Still in the design phase. At a previous meeting, Commissioner Kudlo questioned an editorial in the newspaper regarding the County's cost on the original plan. Although Commissioner Kudlo was not present, Chief Oliveira clarified that the County did not spend \$189,000 on the Makalei Fire Station's original plan and he would reiterate this information to her. To date, all County funds have only been disbursed to the new site and the new plan.
- Pahoa Fire Station: There may be a possible occupancy delay due to an uncertainty of responsibilities between HELCO and the State's Department of Transportation with the relocation of utility infrastructures. In order to come to a consensus on how the issue would be resolved in a timely matter, a meeting was held with HELCO, State's DOT, the County's

Department of Public Works and the Fire Department. The Fire Commission will be updated on the status.

- Fire Administration and Support Facility: Still in the design phase. The department continues to meet with the Design Consultant regarding revised Administration building space requirements.
- Central Fire Station: Presently, the consultant is working on the Environmental Assessment.
- Captain Cook Fire Station: A consensus was reached not to build the additional apparatus bay in consideration of the negative impact on operations.
- Keaau Fire Station: No new updates.
- Warehouse: The County negotiated a lease agreement with a private property owner on Railroad Avenue to acquire warehouse space for Police and Fire Departments. This will allow the Fire Department to relocate items that need to be put away in long term storage and free up space in its current warehouse. Assistant Chief Mento and Battalion Chief Gahan are reclassifying the facility at Central Fire Station as a distribution center rather than a warehouse.

Promotions and Hiring

Active recruits include:

Open-Competitive Recruitment

- Ocean Safety: Two vacancies in Kona. Will be transferring four Water Safety Officer's positions to Isaac Hale Beach Park.
- Storekeeper: An individual was selected for a second storekeeper position. Arrangements are being made for the pre-employment exam. Funding for the position will be allocated from the EMS program.

Internal Recruitment

- Fire Captain: Assessment Center scheduled for March 10 and 11, 2008. Commissioners are welcomed to participate. However, there is a requirement that one must be present for both days.
- Fire Apparatus Trainer: Assessment Center was postponed to February 22, 2008, due to the activation of the EOC during the recent flash flooding. Commissioners are welcomed to attend.

Emergency Operations Division

- February 2 – 4, 2008, Flash Flooding: Identified the location where the run-off began as mauka of the New Hope Christian Fellowship Church on Kupulau Road. The Department of Public Works is continuing to assess what issues attributed to the run-off.
- Kona Flooding: As requested by Commissioner Rosehill, the Fire Department has tried to obtain more information from the Civil Defense Agency and the Department of Public Works regarding an assessment report for the Kona flooding in November/December. Neither Department

is able to provide a report at this time. Once a report is provided to Chief Oliveira, he will inform the commission.

- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program Handouts: As requested at last month's meeting, a brochure on the Disaster Preparedness Training Services was distributed to the Fire Commission.

Support Services Division

- Ocean Safety Bureau: Met with Councilman Angel Pilago in order to work towards providing Ocean Safety services at Kua Bay, which is one of the most heavily used beaches in the State of Hawai'i. Councilman Pilago's Aide informed Chief Oliveira this morning that they have committed \$10,000 to the Fire Department to contract with Scientific Research Service in Australia. The contractor, Dr. Schwartz, would grade and evaluate the ocean shoreline recreational areas and rate them according to specific scientific criteria. This information will identify priorities on allocating resources to protect the community.

Fire Auxiliary Services Bureau

Communication Section

- National Academies of Emergency Medical Dispatch class and ED-Q training held January 7 – 11, 2008. Supervisors and dispatchers attended. The intention of the classes is to develop a quality assurance program in improving the pre-first responder arrival care provided by dispatchers.

Warehouse Section

- As mentioned earlier, Assistant Chief Mento and Battalion Chief Gahan are in the process of completing an overhaul of the existing warehouse with the assistance of the recruits. A draft design for two office spaces to be built in the warehouse was completed.

Maintenance Shop Section

- A pre-construction meeting was held at the Pierce Manufacturing Plant in Wisconsin in order to finalize the cost for the aerial platform to be delivered this year. Fire Equipment Operator Fong and Captain Kojima attended.

Commissioner Bertsch questioned the delivery time frame.

Deputy Chief Honda replied that it would be approximately four months.

Commissioner Bertsch inquired on which station the apparatus would be designated for.

Chief Oliveira responded that it must be determined whether East or West Hawai'i will accommodate the aerial platform because both battalions have

the need for elevated training. The Honolulu Fire Department has a larger fleet of aerial and ladder apparatus, and the Hawai'i Fire Department would like to partner with them. This would allow Underwriters Laboratories to come and run a test on the existing ladder truck that the department owns that may still be serviceable. Also, it could buy them some time before acquiring a second aerial platform. To date, the department has not found documentation indicating why the truck was removed from service, because it occurred before Chief Oliveira's administration came on board. Also, according to Chief Oliveira, Kulani prison has offered to help restore the vehicle.

Commissioner Bertsch asked whether it would be advantageous to send the new apparatus trainer back to the manufacturer to receive training at the time the vehicle gets pre-inspected for shipping.

Chief Oliveira stated that the department will provide its apparatus trainer with as much experience and background as possible on vehicle operations and maintenance.

Emergency Medical Services Bureau

- The 36th Firefighter Recruit class began EMT-B training for 13 individuals on January 7, 2008.
- MICT training began on January 14, 2008, for seven candidates.
- Met with the Hawaii Volcano National Park to update Memorandum Of Understanding of medical responses to the park property.

Training Bureau:

Operations Section

- 37th Firefighter Recruit Class: Introduced earlier, began their first day of Recruit Academy Training on January 2, 2008.
- Explorer Program: The third explorer classes' family orientation is scheduled for February 16, 2008, at 6:00 p.m. Fire Rescue Specialist Kimo Wilson has taken the lead on this project and Fire Chief Oliveira went to KHBC radio station in order to place a radio announcement to recruit interest. FRS Wilson also is going to the schools. He is presently attending Hilo High School. Chief Oliveira expressed appreciation to Explorer Team members. These members are Kimo Wilson, Justin Neeson, Stacy Domingo, Ty Medeiros, Tracey Brennan, and Richard Fong.

Volunteer Section

- Report provided by Volunteer Fire Chief Tom Brandt.
 - Volunteer Fire Chief's meeting was held on January 19, 2008. Appreciation was offered to Chief Oliveira for agreeing to fund the volunteer's (HVFCANet) website.
 - Fire Essential training is expected to be completed by 2009.

- Next Volunteer Fire Chief's meeting is scheduled for April 26, 2008, at the Hilo Training Center. Chief Oliveira will be hosting the event.

Vice-Chair Bowles stated that he was approached by an individual who expressed his concern about a possible movement to disband the volunteers.

Volunteer Fire Chief Brandt stated this is a rumor. He and Chief Oliveira have tried to explain to the volunteers that the County Council determines whether a volunteer company is appropriate for a specific community.

Chief Oliveira thanked Commissioners Bowles and Bertsch for attending the Volunteer Fire Chief's meetings because it underscores the importance of the volunteer program.

New Projects/Business

- Nike Recycling Program: The City and County of Honolulu's Fire Department, Department of Environment Management, and the State's Department of Education established a program that collects all athletic shoes and turns them over to Nike for recycling. The Hawai'i Fire Department would like to participate in the program. It will discuss having Nike commit something to a school on the Big Island in return. Chief Oliveira will keep the commission informed of the status.

Employee/Public Relations

- American Heart Association Heart Walk: Held on Saturday, February 9, 2008.
- 6th Annual Hawaii Fire Department Reunion: Scheduled for Saturday, March 15, 2008, at Hawai'i Preparatory Academy campus. A decision was made to change the event's name from recognition dinner to reunion because it involves the entire department. Invitations were sent to the Fire Commission.
- Emergency Medical Services Week: The 8th Annual EMS Week will be held on Sunday, May 25, 2008, at Queen Liliuokalani Gardens.

Commissioner Bertsch questioned the status on the additional volunteer companies.

Chief Oliveira stated that the resolution was passed by the County Council to establish a Kanehoa Volunteer Fire Company. Kanehoa is a subdivision off of the Kawaihae Road across the chicken ranch. This area is impacted by brush fires on a regular basis. The community approached the Fire Department to ask for its support of the resolution, which was introduced by Councilman Hoffman.

Chief Oliveira stated that the volunteer trainers continue to work with Ainaloa and Kaohe Homestead. Seven members were selected for Ainaloa Volunteer Company. Kaohe Homestead's members still need to be identified. Questions have been raised regarding a volunteer company in Waikoloa. If interest is not generated in Waikoloa, the department will ask Mr. William "Tiki" Morris to consider partnering with Kanehoa Company so that they may benefit from his expertise.

Commissioner Bertsch questioned where the burden of cost would come from to establish a volunteer company.

Chief Oliveira replied that the Fire Department is responsible for the cost. However, the department has come to a juncture where there is no surplus of inventory. Therefore, it will be requesting funding to come with a new volunteer company.

Commissioner Bertsch asked whether the recruits were union employees.

Chief Oliveira replied that they are.

Commissioner Bertsch asked whether there were any union concerns with the recruits working in the warehouse.

Chief Oliveira answered that there was no concern because the recruits will only be cleaning.

In response to Chief Oliveira earlier inquiry regarding Fire Commission meetings being videoconferenced, Deputy Corporation Counsel advised that Hawai'i revised statute Chapter 92 specifically addresses the rules and regulations for public agency meetings. Section 92-3.5 allows for videoconferencing and also allows for boards or commission members to attend a meeting at the videoconference site as long as there is an interactive video and audio capability. There is a requirement of public notice of the site.

Chief Oliveira stated that there would be a need to check on the ADA compliance as well.

Commissioner Bertsch asked if the teleconferencing would be interdepartmental.

Chief Oliveira replied that because the Fire Commission meetings are public meetings, the public would need to be aware of the videoconferencing sites. Also, videoconferencing would benefit commissioners who were unable to attend. They could go to the nearest fire station.

Commissioner Bowles inquired on the Pahoia Fire Station's target date for completion.

Chief Oliveira replied that the department is targeting this summer.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Follow up on the Fire Chief's Annual Evaluation.

Commissioner Brazier informed the commission that he changed the form on the last page.

Commissioner Bertsch asked whether the evaluation was sent to the Mayor.

Commissioner Brazier replied that it was.

Commissioner Bertsch asked Deputy Corporation Counsel Brilhante whether the commission should vote to approve the document in the future.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Brilhante recommended that in the future, the commission should present the written communication to the members and have an official consensus and approval of the document.

NEW BUSINESS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget & Finance (Bowles) No report.

Office Management and Staffing (Bertsch) No report.

Rules and Policies (Rosehill) No report

Public Relations (Pomroy/Bertsch/Browne)

Commissioner Bertsch suggested that the Fire Commission consider establishing a citizen appreciation program.

Commissioner Maedo expressed her concern with public safety.

Commissioner Bertsch replied that from a commissioner's standpoint, he would like to recognize an individual who rendered assistance.

Commissioner Maedo stated that some individuals may not wish to be recognized.

Commissioner Bertsch stated that he would like the commission to extend credit to positive situations, rather than focus on negative issues.

Vice-Chair Bowles suggested a Good Samaritan letter.

Training and Education (Kudlo) No report.

MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Bertsch moved to consider a continued evaluation of an employee of the Hawai'i County Fire Department where consideration of matters affecting privacy will be involved and a closed session is requested, and to consult with Corporation Counsel on questions and issues pertaining to the commission's powers, duties, privileges, immunities, and liabilities. (Pursuant to HRS 92-5 (a)(2) and Hawai'i County Charter Section 13-20(b). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Maedo and unanimously carried.

The regular session ended at 11:15 a.m.

Meeting resumed at 11:45 a.m.

ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION MATTER

Commissioner Maedo requested that the Fire Commission agendaize a discussion on establishing a written guideline on its procedures regarding the Fire Chief's evaluation.

Vice-Chair Bowles instructed the Fire Commission's Secretary to place the discussion on its next agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 10:00 a.m., in the Liquor Control Conference Room, Kona Center Building, 75-5722 Hanama Place, Suite 1170, Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i
- Set agenda for March 12, 2008, meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

KAYCIE A. I. CARTER
Secretary