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HAWAI'I COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION

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REGULAR SESSION - MINUTES **February 14, 2007** **Aupuni Center Conference Room**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Brazier at 10:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

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

Absent:

James Browne
Wil Okabe

A quorum was present.

ALSO PRESENT:

Aaron Arbles
Kaycie Carter
Laurie Kaneta
Ronelle Kubo
Ty Medeiros

Tom Brandt
Glen Honda
Brian Keopuhiwa
Denise Laitenen
Diane Noda, Deputy Corporation Counsel

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

ALSO PRESENT (Cont'd)

Darryl Oliveira, Fire Chief
Roxy Salvador-Keopuhiwa
Noni Sanford

Evan Salvador
Ryan Salvador

STATEMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS (Open to the Public)

None

STATEMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS (Executive Session)

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Maedo moved to accept the January 10, 2007, regular session minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pomroy, Jr. and unanimously carried. Commissioner Bertsch requested that the January 10, 2007, regular session minutes reflect that he arrived late because he attended the Salary Commission meeting on behalf of the Fire Commission.

APPROVAL OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Maedo moved to accept communication numbers 07-03 and 07-04. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bertsch and unanimously carried.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Darryl Oliveira introduced Waiakea High School Senior Evan Salvador. Mr. Salvador participates in the Fire Department's ride along program.

Mr. Salvador explained that his career of choice would be to become a firefighter. He thanked the Fire Department for allowing him the chance to experience and gain knowledge on the duties and responsibilities of a firefighter.

Chief Oliveira introduced Firewise Program Coordinator Denise Laitinen. Ms. Laitinen is also Vice Chair for the Maui Fire Commission. She explained that she was hired by the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park to conduct a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) in Volcano and another for Hawaiian Ocean View Estates. The process began last spring. There was a series of community meetings. A report was finalized. It had to be approved by multiple agencies which included the Fire Department, Civil Defense Agency, and the State's Division of Forestry and Wildlife. The report makes recommendations regarding the risk within Volcano and HOVE and mitigation steps that both the community

and agencies want. The CWPP is crucial in receiving grant funding. There were over 12 groups that applied to the State and Federal agencies this year. None was funded because they did not have CWPP's. A priority list was established through the Firewise community meetings. Some concerns for Volcano are a lack of water, fuel load in common areas, public awareness, etc. The recommended action for Volcano was the creation of secondary emergency access roads, the reduction of fuel loads along the roadside, need for additional prestaged water tanks, etc. On the other hand, Hawaiian Ocean View Estates had slightly different concerns because its location is directly beneath the slope of Mauna Loa. Some of their biggest concerns are having prestaged water tanks, increase communication to residents regarding evacuation, the reduction of fuel load, strengthening of Hawai'i County ordinances, etc. The report has been submitted to the Planning Department, Fire Chief Oliveira submitted it into the general plan. A disaster preparedness committee has been formed in Hawaiian Ocean View Estates and will be going after grant funding for the emergency access road and the prestaged water tanks. In March, Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park will apply for funding for the emergency access road.

Commissioner Bertsch questioned how it was determined which areas are prime targets for receiving these types of programs.

Ms. Laitinen replied that Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park determined that it would need a CWPP in place and took it upon itself to get a plan developed because both HOVE and Volcano communities could impact the park.

Budget

- FY 2007/08 Budget: Meeting held on January 12, 2007, with the Department of Finance to present the program and supplemental budgets. The Ocean Safety Account Clerk position was approved. The rest of the budget is still being reviewed and considered.

Alternative Funding and Grants

- FEMA FY 2005 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: (Plymo-Vent) The permits have been approved and completed. The Contractor will begin installation at Central Fire Station in March.
- FEMA FY 2004 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: (Burn Trailer) Warranty issues have been addressed. The trailer is being prepped to begin training. The Fire Department initiated a request from the State Department of Transportation's Airport Division to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to allow the Fire Department use of its training facility at Hilo Airport. The unused parcel is approximately 2-3 acres large and secured. If approved, the MOU will provide the Fire Department the opportunity to have a dedicated training area. The Burn Trailer will be parked there until a support staff is established. Once the training program is established, the next step will involve taking the

training out to the different districts and having it available to the paid and volunteer staff.

- FEMA FY 2006 Fire Prevention & Safety Grant: Application was submitted on January 11, 2007, to purchase the Public Education/Public Relations Fire Safety and Education Trailer.
- FEMA FY 2007 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: A teleconference session was held on February 8, 2007, with a grant program administrator. Anticipating the grant application period to begin on March 5, 2007. The grant will be submitted in order to receive teleconferencing equipment. Teleconferencing will help deliver training and assist in better communications to all the Fire Stations.

Chief Oliveira stated that the Fire Department is considering the option of a Health and Wellness Grant instead of the telecommunication. Only one application is allowed. He will inform the Fire Commission at the next meeting as to what direction the department will be taking.

Capital Improvement Projects

- Makalei Fire Station: The consultant contract was awarded. The contract period is from January 19, 2007 – July 31, 2007. Consultant must complete the consultant requirements and services, which include the development of the environmental impact statement, subdividing of the property, and the designs of the station.
- Pahoia Fire Station: Received Department of Transportation and Department of Health approval. Proceeding with the building permit process.
- Fire Administration and Support Facility: The Department of Public Works is continuing to negotiate a fee proposal from the consultant.
- Central Fire Station: No new updates.
- Central Fire Station Retrofit Project: At the present time, a pre-construction meeting is being held with the contractor.
- Captain Cook: Department of Public Works is currently reviewing the fee proposal.
- Paauilo Volunteer Station: The Fire Department's design requirements are being incorporated into the Department of Public Works' contract with the consultant.

Promotions and Hiring

- Open-Competitive Recruitment
Fire Fighter Recruit: Ninety applicants completed the physical agility test on January 20, 2007. In the process of scheduling the interviews and moving forward with identifying candidates for the 36th and 37th recruit classes.
- **Internal Recruitment:** Fire Equipment Operator assessment center scheduled for February 17, 2007. Commissioners are welcome to

- participate and observe the assessment centers with a condition that in fairness to each applicant, they attend the entire process.
- Internal recruitment opened for two Battalion Chief positions (Emergency Medical Services and Fire Auxiliary Services Officer) on February 13, 2007, and closes on February 28, 2007.

Emergency Operations Division

- Brush Fires: Waikoloa brush fires on January 29 & 30, 2007, burned a total of 2,705.6 acres. Fires were suspicious in nature; therefore, the Fire Department is working with the Police Department, which is investigating.
- Firefighter 1 training program: Presently the Battalion Chiefs are completing the Firefighter 1 training program in order to meet the benchmark target date of March 2007.
- National Incident Management System training: Battalion Chiefs are working on initiating the Incident Command training to line personnel. Utilizing an internet site through the FEMA office.
- Station Visits: Battalion Chiefs will visit each station once during the three shifts. This will help build a face-to-face contact.

Support Services Division

- Fire Auxiliary Services
 - Fire Communication Center: Dispatchers completed the review of their Emergency Medical Dispatching updates. New dispatchers participated. Delivered by Oahu Instructor Patty Dukes.
 - Assistant Chief Mento continues to meet with the Police Department regarding a Hawaii County Master Street Address Guide. This will allow both Police and Fire Department to use the same type of software.

Warehouse

- Continuing to disburse equipment that was purchased through both the Sayre and Ironman Foundation grant monies. This equipment includes GPS units, portable radios, rescue support equipment, etc.
- Completed distributions of OSHA compliant gas can containers for drip torches.
- Working on finishing the SCBA distribution.

EMS Bureau

- EPCR: Initiated a roll out for the electronic patient care reporting (ePCR) system on Jan. 16, 2007. Experienced software problems that are being addressed.

Prevention Inspection Bureau

- Continuing to maintain performance such as conducting school inspections, fire protection system inspections, and annual requirements for some of the occupancy inspections.

- All Prevention inspectors will attend a five-day fire investigation principal course next week on Oahu. This will help expedite training for the newly promoted Fire Prevention Inspectors. Unfortunately, one Inspector is considering going back on the line. If so, the department would conduct a recruitment to fill the vacancy.

Training Bureau

- 33rd Firefighter recruit class: Being processed for their transition to the permanent status of Firefighter I.
- 34th Firefighter recruit class: Currently in their EMB- B training portion. Will begin their EMT- I in March/April.
- 35th Firefighter recruit class: Finishing up the Fire Essentials, Firefighter I Training. The next phase will include Wildland training, hazMAT Training, Water Safety Training, and Driver Training.
- Recently implemented and distributed a new Driver Training Guideline to the companies. Meeting with the Battalion Chiefs and the Union on how to make the program work effectively for the department.

Volunteer Section

- Captains Clyde Komatsu and Ralph Yawata completed CPR/AED training for 22 volunteer fire companies. Next step is to work towards a standardized and structured firefighter certification program.
- Volunteer report by Tom Brandt: On January 20, 2007, 130 individuals attended and received certification for the CPR/AED training. The volunteers email list has been updated. Only two companies without email capability. Thanks to Laurie Kaneta for keeping the volunteers informed of the department's activities.

New Projects/Business

- Team Building: Met with Department of Research and Development Director Jane Testa to discuss building on the department's management team and seeking outside expertise. Ms. Testa recommended Mr. Ray Oshiro, a private consultant from Oahu, who is a specialist in corporate team building. A strategic plan has not been issued yet. Before finalizing a draft, the department will meet with the staff to identify problems/issues.

Public Education/Relations

- American Heart Association's Heart Walk: Held on Saturday, February 10, 2007, at 8:00 a.m., at Liliuokalani Gardens.
- American Red Cross "Hats Off" Campaign: To be held at KTA-Puainako and Kailua on March 3, 2007. Partnership with the Gas Company to raise awareness and fund the American Red Cross.
- 5th Annual Employees Awards and Recognition Dinner: Invitations will be mailed to all Commissioners for the fifth annual dinner to be held on Saturday, March 24, 2007, at the Hilo Hawaiian Hotel.

Commissioner Rosehill questioned the expansion at the Captain Cook station.

Chief Oliveira answered that the new trucks are built bigger and now contain at least 1000 gallons of water. It is necessary to add a third apparatus bay to accommodate the new full size truck.

Chair Brazier questioned the target date for the Pahoia Fire Station.

Chief Oliveira replied that based on discussions with the Department of Public Works, once groundbreaking begins it could take eight months to a year to complete. It is difficult to provide an accurate timetable because of obstacles and unforeseen problems that are beyond the control of the Fire department.

Commissioner Pomroy inquired on how Central Fire Station's personnel proceed to the apparatus when the alarm is heard.

Chief Oliveira responded that the personnel upstairs will proceed to the stairs. Although some of the poles are still in service, the administration does not encourage their use because of the risk for a potential injury. In order to avoid this issue with future sites, the department looks for parcels that will be large enough to develop a single level facility. Fortunately, there have not been any accidents reported at Central Fire Station.

Commissioner Pomroy expressed his concern for Central Fire Station's repair issues.

Chief Oliveira stated that in 2005, the HFD provided the Department of Public Works a comprehensive facility repair/renovation report. It listed a matrix of each station's basic and critical needs for repairs. The HFD will continue to request these items; however, they realize that the Department of Public Works has responsibilities towards all of the county facilities, with the exception of the Department of Parks and Recreation's facilities. A copy of the report will be distributed to the Fire Commission. Also, the department is in the process of photographing the stations.

Commissioner Kudlo questioned whether anything on the report was addressed.

Chief Oliveira replied that some repairs have been addressed. Unfortunately, due to incidents such as the earthquake, projects were put on hold. The Fire Department is considering alternative and creative ways to address the repairs.

Commissioner Bertsch questioned whether the ride along program was a formal or a pilot program.

Chief Oliveira replied that there were both. A formal program is established with Hilo High School, which is a career health pathway program. Students will

schedule ride along times during school hours. This will give them the opportunity to see the transition of patient care from the field, to E.R., and all the way through to the hospital facility. The informal program that Mr. Evan Salvador participates in is a ride along program that occurs after hours or on the weekends. Some participants include high school and college students, nurses, and other public interests. There are waivers and rules that are signed by the participants.

Commissioner Bertsch asked whether the Fire Department was considering expanding the program to other district schools and discussing how the students may receive credit for volunteering in the program.

Chief Oliveira stated that the department does encourage the program expansion. Mr. Miles Nakanishi at Hilo High School is working with the Department of Education to establish the program.

Commission Bertsch questioned the status of the Puuanahulu Fire Station.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Diane Noda responded that once the station passes the final ADA inspection, the agreement between the county and the community association would be circulated for signatures.

Commissioner Bowles questioned the “tail chasing” involved with the recent brush fire in Waikoloa.

Chief Oliveira replied that the Emergency Operation Center is activated when a large-scale incident occurs. Liaisons from different departments coordinate and communicate between the different agencies. However, not all departments have a liaison in the incident command post because everyone is strapped for manpower.

Commissioner Bowles inquired on the location of the Makalei Fire Station.

Chief Oliveira answered that the Fire Department would enter the access road and proceed onto the highway through a recognized intersection. The Department of Transportation confirmed that there is an appropriate site distance.

Regarding the budget, Commissioner Bowles questioned whether the commission offered much input.

Chief Oliveira answered that there has not been much involvement in the planning of the budget since he left the commission.

Commissioner Pomroy inquired on the driver-training program.

Deputy Chief Glen Honda explained that there were two portions of the driver-training program. The first portion involves the recruits. In order for them to receive their driver competency certificate they are required to complete 40 hours of classroom activity and 40 hours of driving. The second portion is the driver audit, which is done biannually for the line personnel. The auditor will ride along with the driver. The auditors are Fire Equipment Operators. The auditing is tagged with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) license that needs to be renewed every two years. The Fire Department requires all drivers to put in two hours of driving each month. A log of their activity needs to be reported quarterly (6 hours a quarter). Also, the Fire Department is exempt from the Commercial Drivers License (CDL).

Chief Oliveira introduced Union Representatives Ty Mederios and Aaron Arbles.

MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Maedo moved to go to an executive session to consider the evaluation of an employee of the Hawai'i County Fire Department where consideration of matters affecting privacy would be involved and a closed session was requested. Commission Kudlo seconded the motion and it was unanimously carried.

The regular session ended at 11:05 a.m.

Meeting resumed at 12:00 p.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Follow up on the Fire Chief's evaluation

Commissioner Maedo will submit a letter to the Mayor. She reminded the commissioners to turn in their evaluation form to her by the end of the month.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Noda clarified for the record that the Fire Chief's 2006 evaluation would be done by the commissioners who served in 2006.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Budget and Finance**

Commissioner Kudlo will serve on the Budget and Finance Committee.

- **Office Management and Staffing**

Commissioner Bertsch will serve on the Office Management and Staffing Committee.

- **Rules and Policies**

Commissioner Rosehill will serve on the Rules and Policies Committee.

- **Public Relations**

Commissioner Pomroy will serve on the Public Relations Committee.

- **Training and Education**

Commissioner Maedo will serve on the Training and Education Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

- Presentation by Firewise Coordinator Denise Laitinen (see below Chief's report)
- Assignment of committees (see above)
- Ride along program (see below Chief's report)

PUBLIC STATEMENTS

Commissioner Bertsch recommended that a thank you letter be sent to Waiakea High School student Mr. Evan Salvador for attending the Fire Commission meeting. Commissioner Maedo will draft a letter. Once Chair Brazier approves and signs, the Fire Commission's secretary will mail it to Mr. Salvador.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday, March 14, 2007, at 10:00 a.m., in the Liquor Control Conference Room, Kona Center Building, 75-5722 Hanama Place, Suite 1170, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii'i.
- Set agenda for March 14, 2007, meeting

Deputy Corporation Counsel Noda reminded the commission to email Chair Brazier and carbon copy Secretary Kaycie Carter all agenda items.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

KAYCIE A. I. CARTER
Secretary