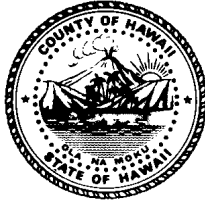


Harry Kim  
Mayor



Dixie Kaetsu  
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow  
Deputy Managing Director

## HAWAI'I COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION

C/O 25 Aupuni Street #217, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

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### **REGULAR SESSION - MINUTES** **March 12, 2008** **Liquor Control Conference Room** **Kailua-Kona, Hawaii**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

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

#### **ROLL CALL**

#### **PRESENT:**

John Bertsch  
Stephen Bowles  
Neil Brazier  
James Browne  
Karen Kudlo  
Karen Maedo  
Wil Okabe, Chair  
Henry Pomroy  
Bill Rosehill

A quorum was present.

#### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Aaron Arbles  
Bill Brillhante, Deputy Corporation Counsel  
Kaycie Carter  
Mac Goddard  
Lunakanawai Hauanio  
Laurie Kaneta  
William Morris  
Darryl Oliveira, Fire Chief

*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 Rosehill moved to accept the February 13, 2008, regular and executive session minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pomroy and unanimously carried.

### **APPROVAL OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioner Maedo moved to accept communication numbers 08-02. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bertsch and unanimously carried.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Bill Brilhante offered to provide refresher training to the Fire Commission regarding the Ethics rules and guidelines.

Chair Okabe questioned whether the training was in addition to the Hawai'i Sunshine Law training scheduled in April by Corporation Counsel Lincoln Ashida.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Bill Brilhante answered that it would be and he will make the necessary arrangements for those who are interested. Also, the session would be strictly a training session and there will not be any discussions regarding board business.

Commissioner Bertsch suggested that the training session occur before or after the April 9, 2008, meeting in Hilo.

### **CHIEF'S REPORT**

#### Budget

- FY 2008/09 Budget: Submitted budget to the Mayor for approval. The approved items include the following:
  - 1.6 million for helicopter (Chopper 1).
  - \$193,486 for Isaac Hale Beach Park's operational costs.
  - \$85,715 for department adjustments regarding salary and wages.

Chief Oliveira will meet with Commissioner Bowles next week to review the budget and will be presenting the budget to the County Council on April 1, 2008, at 1:30 p.m.

### Alternative Funding and Grants

- FEMA FY 2007 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: Received notification of award to purchase and install video conferencing equipment at various stations.
- State Department of Transportation Safe Highways Grant: Once the grant period opens, the department will submit grant application to purchase OSHA traffic safety vests for both paid and volunteer staff.

### Capital Improvement Projects

- Makalei Fire Station: On Monday, March 10, 2008, the Mayor met with the representative of the landowner to facilitate the acquisition of the land by the County. Close to finalizing the design. Anticipating it will go out for construction contract bid by summer and ground breaking before the end of the year. The commission was offered the opportunity to review the schematics and plans.
- Pahoa Fire Station: Met with HELCO, State Department of Transportation, and Department of Public Works' Engineering Division in order to expedite and facilitate a smoother development of the off-site improvements. The Department of Public Works' Engineer advised the Fire Department that the State's DOT and HELCO are communicating and he is optimistic that the process of relocating the utility poles off the easement, which is needed to create the station's driveway, is being resolved. The Fire Commission and the community will be kept informed of the status. Public comment survey was distributed to the community.
- Fire Administration and Support Facility: Moving to the design phase.
- Central Fire Station: No new update.
- Central Fire Station Retrofit Project: No new update.
- Captain Cook Fire Station: As reported last month, a decision was made not to build the extension to the station because it would be more problematic to force the additional apparatus bay onto the station. However, the design will be kept, in the event that the State complex is decommissioned or renovated in the future. Once that occurs, the Fire Department will reconsider the extension. The Fire Department will proceed with the ADA improvements and Hazardous Material Abatement project. The personnel identified a building for their temporary relocation. The building is owned by the National Park Service in Honaunau, which is offering it to the Fire Department free of charge. The building remains in the district and is approximately 6.1 mile south of the existing Fire Station. The Fire Department would like to inform the National Park Service when they would be able to relocate. However, the date cannot be determined until after the construction contract goes out for bid.
- Keaau Fire Station: No new update.
- Honokaa Fire Station: No new update.

### Promotions and Hiring

Active recruits include:

### Open-Competitive Recruitment

- Ocean Safety: An individual was selected for a half time position. Opened up services on March 1, 2008, at Isaac Hale Beach Park (Pohoiki). At the present time, there is no physical structure to accommodate the staff. Therefore, the department is working with the Department of Public Works Building Division to erect a temporary lifeguard tower. Currently, the staff is using a temporary tent and bench facilities in order to provide service and protection.
- Storekeeper (EMS): Filled the position and the individual will be introduced at the next Fire Commission meeting.

### Internal Recruitment

- Fire Captain: Completed Assessment Center in one day on March 10, 2008. Deputy Chief Glen Honda and the panel are presently reviewing the results and will forward their recommendations of the prospective candidates under consideration.
- Fire Apparatus Trainer: Met with the interested applicant on March 11, 2008. The applicant will be given an opportunity to review the driver training program's expectations before accepting the position.
- Fire Equipment Operator: Completed an assessment for two previously deployed employees. The USERRA regulations allow members to return to work and to participate in any promotion opportunity that may have occurred while they were on deployment. Shortly, the department will open recruitment for the other vacant FEO positions.

### Emergency Operations Division

- Lava Flow/Viewing: Assistant Chief Mento is on loan to the Civil Defense Agency. The Mayor selected Assistant Chief Mento to be the Project Manager for operations at the lava site. AC Mento's projects and assignments are reassigned to other staff members. On March 8, 2008, from 2:00 pm. – 8:00 p.m., there was a count of an estimated three to five thousand visitors, and the estimated count by the end of that night was between eight to ten thousand visitors. On March 9, 2008, the count was reduced to approximately four to five thousand visitors. As the week continues, the number of visitors fluctuates.
- Civilian Support Team Exercise: At the present time, Battalion Chief Coloma is working on the week long training to be held on March 25, 2008, for HazMat personnel.

### Support Services Division

- Ocean Safety Bureau: Currently, a study is being conducted in order to assess the conditions at ocean shoreline recreational areas that are without Ocean Safety service.

### Fire Auxiliary Services Bureau

#### Communication Section

- Recently installed security cameras for the dispatch center. There are three cameras monitoring the parking lot and the entrance. The cameras were installed due to harassing phone calls. As a result, the dispatchers will no longer answer calls with their names.

Chair Okabe questioned whether the Police Department was informed.

Chief Oliveira replied that the Police Department identified the caller and the phone calls have ceased.

#### Maintenance Shop Section

- Recently, the department sent Chief Mechanic Glen Maesato to Burtons Fire to improve on his skills related to diagnostic testing on the department's new apparatus. Burtons Fire is a company that refurbishes fire trucks. This will allow the department the opportunity to purchase specific designed apparatus for the volunteer companies that need better equipment. Presently, the department is working on securing a water tanker for Kohala Ranch, and the community is holding a fundraiser.

#### Emergency Medical Services Bureau

- Continue to make progress on the implementation of the Patient Care Recording System. Although the staff will be sent to a conference in April, they have expressed concern on the system not being user friendly. The personnel would like to communicate to the Department of Health its consideration on renovating the existing software or replacing it with a better product. The goal is to support the Department of Health in collecting data; however, it is necessary to uphold patient care.

#### Prevention Inspection Bureau:

- Arson Detection Canine Program: Fire Prevention Inspector Robert Perreira has been assigned as the department's dog handler, and will travel to Maine in April in order to pick up the animal. The department is acquiring the dog through a program that is sponsored by State Farm Insurance. The dog's training and expertise is with the detection and presence of hydrocarbons or fuels used in the ignition of fires.

#### Training Bureau

##### Operations Section

- 36<sup>th</sup> Firefighter Recruit Class: Currently in EMT-B training. The Fire Department's MICT Chris Honda is administering and delivering the curriculum.
- Explorer Program: Conducted interviews for the third explorer class which will begin on Saturday, March 22, 2008. There was an increased number of 22 applicants who participated at the family orientation. The panel selected 20 of those individuals.

Chair Okabe questioned whether any of the individuals from the first explorer program applied for the 38<sup>th</sup> Firefighter recruit class.

Chief Oliveira replied that there are several of them who are interested. However, they are graduating from high school in June.

Chair Okabe inquired on the age requirement.

Chief Oliveira replied that at the present time there is no minimum age requirement. There is a requirement to have a GED or high school diploma. The Fire Department is trying to establish a minimum age requirement of 21.

Chair Okabe asked why there is not currently a minimum age requirement.

Chief Oliveira explained that the Department of Human Resources must allow the establishment of an age requirement.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Brilhante added that there are separate State and Federal regulations. At the present time, the way the laws are currently written, the Hawai'i State regulations are more restrictive than the Federal regulations regarding age discrimination. It is necessary for the Hawai'i County Fire Department to prove the significance of a proposed age requirement in relation to a job performance requirement.

Commissioner Pomroy asked whether there was an age requirement with the Police Department.

Chief Oliveira replied that because of the use of firearms, the Police Department does have an age requirement of 21.

#### Volunteer Section

- Volunteer Firefighter Mac Goddard reported that Fire Essential training continues to run smoothly.

Chief Oliveira stated that the volunteers' concerns on the Firefighter I training program were addressed at the last Volunteer Chief's meeting. It was expressed to the volunteers that the training allows everyone in the department the standardized training foundation. Also, the training protects any liability in the department. The volunteers have made a commitment to complete training by 2010.

Chief Oliveira reported that the Kanehoa Volunteer Company is receiving training and will be soon going online.

Commissioner Browne asked whether equipment was established for the Kanehoa Volunteer Company.

Chief Oliveira replied that the department will be submitting a detailed list of equipment to Councilman Hoffman. Also, the community has expressed that they would like to assist in acquiring a vehicle.

#### New Projects/Business

- Hawai'i County Fire Commission communication number 08-01: The department has been unable to contact that party and will continue to address the individual's concern.
- GIS Project: Working with the Department of Data Systems in order to create visual prospective regarding maps with layers to show incident activity. This would allow the department to identify visually the concentration of calls that occur within the community. There is consideration to establish this project islandwide.

#### Employee/Public Relations

- 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Hawai'i Fire Department Reunion: Due to a lack of participation, the event scheduled for March 15, 2008, was cancelled. There is consideration to arrange the event to take place during the day and to be more family oriented.
- American Red Cross Hats Off Campaign: Held in Kona and Hilo on March 8, 2008, to raise awareness and money for American Red Cross.
- Emergency Medical Services Week: The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual EMS week will begin on Sunday, May 25, 2008, at Queen Liliuokalani Gardens.

Commissioner Kudlo questioned whether all of the Fire Stations were in ADA compliance.

Chief Oliveira replied that it is the Department of Public Works' responsibility to ensure that all County Government facilities are within ADA compliance.

Commissioner Kudlo asked whether the consideration of a boy's detention facility in the area influenced the Fire Department on its decision not to continue with the Captain Cook Fire Station's extension.

Chief Oliveira answered that it was not a factor in their decision.

Commissioner Kudlo inquired on the security at the eruption site after 10:00 p.m.

Chief Oliveira replied that there is private security that is manning a road block. The road is not gated because there are residents in the area.

Commissioner Kudlo asked whether the Department of Health offered training for the Patient Care Recording system.

Chief Oliveira explained that although the product was purchased and implemented by the Department of Health, training was provided by the vendor.

Commissioner Bowles stated that the personnel he spoke with advised him that their concern with the system is how it is utilized in the field.

Chief Oliveira replied that it is challenging for the busier stations. The busier stations find that the software is difficult to manage when responding to continuous calls. It is challenging for them because it is using a wireless technology to upload the data from the PC to the server. Whenever there are problems with connectivity, it is frustrating for the personnel. Also, the busier stations are having a problem with completing the document for the doctor's before the next call.

Commissioner Kudlo stated that she understands the Physician's concerns because the patient is brought in and is in their care.

Chief Oliveira stated that it is difficult because when the personnel respond to an incident where there are multiple patients, the personnel can only input one patient at a time.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Brilhante asked whether the Patient Care Recording system interfered with the Fire Department's level of patient care provided.

Chief Oliveira stated that the Fire Department's priority is patient care. However, personnel have expressed to the Department of Health that the data system must work in conjunction with, and not interfere with, patient care. Therefore, the process should not be too complicated.

Commissioner Bowles asked whether physicians shared and supported the Fire Departments concern.

Chief Oliveira replied that the Emergency Room staff is part of the same system, and does support the Fire Departments concerns.

Commissioner Kudlo asked whether the department would be allowed to do a written report and then forward the data later.

Chief Oliveira replied that the personnel created a cheat sheet that allows them to collect the critical information for the emergency room and then later complete the electronic document.

Commissioner Kudlo expressed her concern with the liability involved if information was not obtained at the appropriate time.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Brilhante said that if the Patient Care Recording system is interfering with patient care, the matter should be addressed.

Chief Oliveira explained that the matter is being addressed with the Department of Health and the Fire Department is taking a proactive role in finding a solution.

Mr. Lunakanawai Hauanio asked to make a public statement.

The Fire Commission agreed to hear his statement.

Mr. Hauanio thanked the Fire Department for providing CERT training to his community, and for allowing his 14 year old son to participate. He suggested that the County consider implementing self-sufficient power systems with its new developments, such as the Makalei Fire Station.

Commissioner Browne agreed with Mr. Hauanio's suggestion.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- Guidelines for the Fire Chief's annual evaluation – changes and/or suggestions.

Commissioner Maedo distributed a draft on the Fire Commission's Fire Chief Evaluation procedure. (See Attachment "A")

Commissioner Kudlo suggested that the commission add a few more steps such as the first step being a discussion in the evaluation of the evaluation form, because the commission may want to add/delete from the form.

Commissioner Maedo replied that she tried to avoid the smaller steps. It does not leave the commission with much discretion. The commission should want as much discretion as possible.

Commissioner Rosehill stated that the commissioners should be involved in the final document prior to reviewing it with the Fire Chief in executive session.

Commissioner Bertsch commented that all documents from the commission need to be ratified by the members prior to dissemination.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Brilhante inquired with Corporation Counsel Lincoln Ashida who advised him that the Police Commission schedules a special meeting the night before the commission meeting in order to discuss and address the evaluation. In executive session, they formulize a final document that will be presented to the Police Chief.

Commissioner Bertsch, a former Police Commissioner, said it was necessary for the Police Commission to implement a special meeting because its scheduled meetings are lengthy.

Commissioner Maedo stated that since the Fire Commission was established, it has adopted many of the Police Commission's procedures and policies.

Chair Okabe recommended that the commission review the draft and continue the discussion at its next meeting. At that time, they should set a timeline for the commission to finalize the procedures. He hopes to have it finalized by December 2008.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Budget & Finance (Bowles)** Commissioner Bowles will meet with the Fire Chief next week in order to review the budget. He will attend the County Council meeting on April 1, 2008, when the budget is presented.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Brilhante reminded the commission that any commission member who makes a public statement before the County Council regarding the Hawai'i Fire Department's budget, without the authorization of the entire commission, would be making a statement as a citizen and not as a member of the Fire Commission.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Brilhante recommended that the commission make an official decision whether to authorize Commissioner Bowles to be a representative of the Fire Commission as related to budget matters.

Commissioner Bertsch made a motion to authorize Commissioner Bowles to speak on behalf of the Hawai'i County Fire Commission' Budget and Finance Committee. Commissioner Maedo seconded the motion and it was unanimously carried.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Brilhante reminded the Fire Commission to place the topic on its upcoming agenda.

**Office Management and Staffing (Bertsch)** No report.

**Rules and Policies (Rosehill)** Due to Commissioner Maedo's departure from the Fire Commission, Commissioner Rosehill offered to take over her assignment of the procedures involving the Fire Chief's evaluation. Commissioner Rosehill will begin the process with a proposal at the next monthly meeting.

**Public Relations (Pomroy/Bertsch/Browne)** No report.

**Training and Education (Kudlo)** Commissioner Kudlo inquired on the maintenance of the Fire Station libraries.

Chief Oliveira replied that the Deputy Chief Honda is in the process of ordering current materials. The Captains and the personnel are responsible for the protection of its materials.

Commissioner Kudlo questioned whether the Fire Department inquired with the Department of Education on acquiring teachers for the HCC program.

Chief Oliveira stated the Fire Department has not recruited teachers because it is the HCC's program and their employment. However, the Fire Department has encouraged HCC to consider other sources.

Regarding the HFD's Health and Wellness program, Commissioner Kudlo stated that she is a community health educator with Child and Family Service. She will contact people working in the program in order to add some family planning programs and healthy choice programs that would be appropriate for adults and children.

Commissioner Kudlo inquired on the department's participation in ICS training.

Chief Oliveira replied that, to date, everyone has completed the ICS 100 and 200. There is a portion of employees that have completed the 300 and another portion of employees who are moving toward the 700 and 800. All uniform staff has completed the fundamental classes. He will provide a spreadsheet at the next meeting.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 9, 2008, at 10:00 a.m. in the Liquor Control Conference Room, Aupuni Center Conference Room, 101 Pauahi Street, Hilo, Hawai'i
- Set agenda for April 9, 2008, meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 11:36 a.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

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KAYCIE A. I. CARTER  
Secretary

## **FIRE COMMISSION DRAFT**

### **FIRE CHIEF EVALUATION PROCEDURES**

1. Chair determines deadlines and collects each commissioner's input (on evaluation form).
2. Chair aggregates input and prepares report to commissioners for further input and review.
3. Chair prepares final document to be shared with F-1 in executive session.
4. Chair submits F-1 evaluation to Mayor.