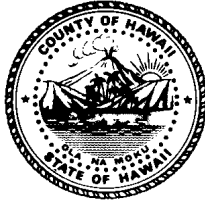


Harry Kim
Mayor



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 **April 11, 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
James Browne
Neil Brazier, Chair
Karen Maedo
Henry Pomroy, Jr.
Wil Okabe
Bill Rosehill

Excused:

Karen Kudlo

A quorum was present.

ALSO PRESENT:

Edward Akiona
Kaycie Carter
Dale Cordero
Glen Honda
Laurie Kaneta
Darryl Oliveira, Fire Chief
Noni Sanford

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

STATEMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS (Executive Session)

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Maedo moved to accept the March 14, 2007, regular session minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Okabe and unanimously carried.

Commissioner Bertsch moved to accept the March 14, 2007, executive session minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rosehill and unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Maedo moved to accept communication numbers 07-08 and 07-10. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bertsch and unanimously carried.

MOTION TO GO TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Bertsch moved and Commissioner Maedo seconded meeting in an executive session to consider the discipline of or charges brought against 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(2) and Hawai'i County Charter Section 13-20(b). The motion was unanimously carried.

The regular session ended and the executive session began at 10:05 a.m.

Regular session resumed at 12:25 p.m.

ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION MATTER

- **Complaint HCFC No. 06-02:** Firefighter's request to have reconsideration by the commission regarding its decision at the previous (3-14-07) meeting.

Commissioner Maedo moved to have a follow-up letter sent from the Fire Commission to the complainant delineating which allegations were sustained, with a copy to the Fire Chief and the defendant. Commissioner Rosehill seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following votes:

Ayes – Bowles, Brazier, Browne, Maedo, Okabe, Pomroy, and Rosehill.
Nay - Bertsch.

- **Complaint HCFC No. 07-01:** Consideration of complaint filed more than sixty days after the incident on which the complaint is based. Complainant alleges two fire fighters purposely withheld information about a hit and run incident, failed to report duties done, etc.
- **Complaint HCFC No. 07-02:** Consideration of complaint filed more than sixty days after the incident on which the complaint is based. Complainant alleges a fire fighter was driving under the influence of intoxicating liquor, purposely withheld information about a hit and run incident, lied to the police, etc.

Commissioner Bertsch moved that due to the time lapse, the Fire Commission would not consider complaint 07-01 and 07-02. Commissioner Maedo seconded the motion. Discussion: Commissioner Bertsch explained that the documents presented were not received within 60 days of the incident. The Fire Commission has the authority to make exceptions; however, the first document presented was a copy of the complainant's daughter's incident in 2005. The other document dated August 5, 2005, was his son's incident report. It is dated the day after the alleged incident occurred and does not reflect on any of the accused individuals.

Mr. Cordero disagreed with the Fire Commission's decision.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Noda explained to Mr. Cordero that he already had the opportunity to present his complaint. It was now the Fire Commission's turn to pronounce their decision.

Commissioner Bowles advised the complainant that he may return with additional information if it became available.

The motion carried with the following votes.

Ayes – Bertsch, Bowles, Brazier, Browne, Maedo, Okabe
Abstained – Pomroy and Rosehill

Mr. Cordero continued to question the Fire Commission's decision. He asked to file an appeal.

The Fire Commission advised him that he could return if he had additional evidence.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Budget

- FY 2007/08 Budget: Presented the budget before the County Council on March 30, 2007. Received directive from members of the County Council to add items into the budget before it returns to them in May. The Fire Department does not have authority to insert items to the budget. The Fire Department must go through the Department of Finance and the Mayor.

Alternative Funding and Grants

- FEMA FY 2005 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: (Plymo-Vent) Installations are almost completed. Waiting for the duct systems to be installed, this will complete and allow the system to be operational.
- FEMA FY 2004 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: (Burn Trailer) Still awaiting approval of the Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) from the State Department of Transportation. The last update was that it is sitting at the State Attorney General's office. Chief Oliveira will inquire with an attorney with the State Attorney General's Office at the next State Fire Council meeting. A demonstration will be scheduled for the next Fire Commission's meeting.
- FEMA FY 2006 Fire Prevention & Safety Grant: Submitted application in January to purchase the Public Education/Public Relations Fire Safety and Education Trailer. Awaiting approval of award.
- FEMA FY 2007 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: Grant period opened on March 29 and closes on May 4, 2007. Grant writing teams from both Health & Wellness Fitness Program committee and Video Teleconferencing training committee will meet on April 17 to determine which application will be submitted. Will inform the Fire Commission of the department's decision at the Fire Commission's May meeting.

Capital Improvement Projects

- Makalei Fire Station: Continuing to work with the consultant.
- Pahoa Fire Station: Construction phase continuing.
- Fire Administration & Support Facility: Working with Design Consultant on the design process.
- Central Fire Station: Began the process of working on an environmental review in partnership with the Department of Public Works. Will be selecting a consultant.
- Central Fire Station Retrofit Project: Presently, the Department of Public Works is reviewing the subcontractor bids. Will begin shortly.
- Captain Cook Station: Received fee proposal; currently under review by Department of Public Works.

- Paauilo Volunteer Station: Met with the Department of Public Works Highways Division to discuss site use issues. It was determined that the Department of Public Works project is in need of more space than originally planned. The Fire Department has proposed to use site located on the Honokaa side of access road. The Department of Public Works recognizes the Fire Department's need to have a garage for the volunteers. As an interim measure, they will include an area to temporarily house the volunteers' vehicles.

Promotions and Hiring
Active recruits include:

Open-Competitive Recruitment

- Fire Fighter Recruit Candidates: Candidates presently undergoing medical screening. In the process of scheduling interviews for the next prospective applicants. The 36th recruit class to begin this summer. The 37th recruit class will begin at the end of the calendar year.
- 36th Firefighter Recruit Family Orientation: Tentatively scheduled for May 25, 2007. The date may change if recruits begin in July rather than June.

Internal Recruitment

- Fire Equipment Operator Assessment: Promoted 12 Fire Equipment Operators effective April 1, 2007. One vacancy remains, which is the Driver Trainer position. Working with the Department of Human Resources to get the position description updated in order to fill the position immediately.
- Battalion Chief's Assessment Center: An assessment center will be held for the two vacant Battalion Chief positions with EMS and Fire Auxiliary Services. Will contact Chair Brazier to notify the commission of the date of the event.

Support Services Division

- Fire Auxiliary Services
 - Fire Communication Center
 - Assistant Chief Quince Mento and staff continue to work on the Wireless 911 upgrade.
 - Recently, Dispatch Supervisors attended GIS class at the University of Hawaii.

Inspection Bureau

- Developing a temporary assignment criteria and qualification process for Captain Position.

Training Bureau:

- 34th Firefighter Recruit Class: Presently in the clinical phase of the Emergency Medical Technician-Intermediate course which is slated to run

until May 5, 2007. Graduation will be held on May 12, 2007. Invitations will be sent to the Fire Commission.

- 35th Firefighter Recruit Class: Still in their Firefighter training. Once completed they will begin EMT classes.

Volunteer Section:

- Both Training Captains Clyde Komatsu and Ralph Yawata are making significant strides on improvements. The objectives for the volunteer section were to get a count of all active volunteers, train them in First Responder & CPR, and develop training criteria. These objectives have been met. Will be re-establishing the driver training program. This will include the scheduling and upkeep of PUC medical exams and the hands on driver training portion of the competency programs. Another project will be to have an efficient and accurate inventory of each volunteer company. After visiting the volunteer companies, 210 active volunteers were identified.
- West Hawaii: Trained 75 volunteers (9 companies) in CPR/AED, First Responder, Wet hose evolutions, Water Supply
- East Hawaii: Trained 64 volunteers (12 companies) in First Responder, Fire Safety, and Incident Command
- Volunteer Chief's Meeting: Will be held on April 21, 2007, at 10:00 a.m., at Pahala Fire Station.
- Noni Sanford reported that there issuing photo I.D.'s for the volunteers is being considered.

Other Support Division Activities:

- Assistant Chief Mento continues to work with FEMA on reimbursements for October 15, 2006, earthquake damages.
- Assistant Chief Mento continues to work with representatives from the Hawai'i Police Department and the Department of Data Systems on the selection of a consultant to design a new County radio system.
- Assistant Chief Mento is working with the Department of Public Works, Pacific Wireless, Inc., and the Office of the Corporation Counsel on the relocation of the Kapoho Radio Tower to the Puna Geothermal site. Will improve and maintaining existing communication for the entire lower Puna district.
- Assistant Chief Mento attended an Amber/Maile Alert Training on Oahu. The purpose of the training is to develop a County and State-wide response to reports of children presumed abducted and in danger.

New Projects/Business

- Captain Cook Fire Engine: Scheduled for delivery this month. If delivered on time, will bring to the Fire Commission's May meeting.
- Explorer Program: Firefighter Stacy Domingo, Fire Rescue Specialist Justin Neeson, Firefighter MICT Tracy Brennan, and Fire Rescue Specialist Kimo Wilson are actively working to get program off the ground.
- Fire Science: Grant monies that were being used to waive the tuition for the attendees in the classes have been exhausted. Will continue to work with the Hawaii Community College on retaining the program. The Chancellor has expressed his commitment and support of the program. Therefore, the Fire Department will be providing him with a proposal plan on how to continue the program.
- The Greg Malkin Memorial Foundation: Received a donation from the Greg Malkin's family for approximately \$3,600. The donation was used to purchase rescue gear. The family has expressed its commitment to partner with the Daniel Sayre Foundation.

Employee/Public Relations

- 5th Annual Employees & Awards Dinner: Scheduled for August 25, 2007, one week prior to the Sayre Memorial Foundation Dinner & Award Ceremony. It is necessary to determine whether the proximity of both events will conflict with each other.
- 34th Firefighter Recruit Class Graduation: To be held on May 12, 2007, at 5:00 p.m., at Nani Mau Gardens. Commissioners are invited and encouraged to attend.
- EMS Week: 7th Annual 5K Run/Walk/Keiki Run to be held on Sunday, May 27, 2007, at Liliuokalani Gardens.

Commissioner Okabe inquired on the status of the Ocean Safety Lifeguard transition into the Fire Department.

Chief Oliveira answered that everything is on track. The County Charter allows the Mayor the authority to reposition existing programs in departments as he deems appropriate. Therefore, County Council action was not necessary. The Fire Department met with its personnel to work on establishing the account clerk position prior to the transition.

Commissioner Bowles questioned the policies involved with patient transfers.

Chief Oliveira replied that a transfer occurs when a physician requests a patient be transferred from one facility to another. It depends on the urgency of the patient's condition. The physicians' control how and when the transfer occurs. The Fire Department is one of the two resources used to complete the transfer. The primary resource is American Medical Response (AMR). Their staff is 90% HFD's personnel. The Fire Department has discussed the situation with Dr. Jones, the State Medical Control Officer of the Big Island. He is appointed by

the State Medical Director to oversee all the EMS programs on this Island. The coordination of the transfers is being addressed because it is taxing the 911 service. It is a system problem with the private entity not being able to keep up with the demand and a coordination problem with the physician so transfers do not overburden the 911 system. Clearer guidelines for physicians requesting transfers are necessary.

Commissioner Bowles asked whether the Fire Commission could assist.

Chief Oliveira replied that any time members of the community voice their concern it adds merit to what the Fire Department communicates. The Fire Commission represents districts. The root of the problem is beyond EMS. The reason why the patient is being transferred is that there is not enough adequate care in every community.

Commissioner Bertsch asked whether patient transfers are an issue.

Chief Oliveira replied that they are, mainly because they are taxing the 911 resource.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget & Finance (Kudlo) No report.

Office Management and Staffing (Bertsch) No report.

Rules and Policies (Rosehill) No report.

Public Relations (Pomroy) No report.

Training and Education (Maedo) No report.

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC STATEMENTS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday, May 9, 2007, at 10:00 a.m., in the Aupuni Center Conference Room, Aupuni Center Building, 101 Pauahi Street, Hilo, Hawai'i.
- Set agenda for May 9, 2007, meeting

Meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

KAYCIE A. I. CARTER
Secretary