

Harry Kim
Mayor



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HAWAI'I COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION

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REGULAR SESSION - MINUTES **June 18, 2008** **Liquor Control Conference Room** **Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Okabe at 10:07 a.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

John Bertsch
James Browne
Karen Kudlo
Wil Okabe, Chair
Bill Rosehill

Excused: Stephen Bowles
Henry Pomroy

A quorum was present.

ALSO PRESENT:

Aaron Arbles
Mike Udovic, Deputy Corporation Counsel
Kaycie Carter
Laurie Kaneta
Chris Stellfox

Hawai'i County is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

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

STATEMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS (Open to the Public)

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Bertsch moved to accept the May 13, 2008, regular session minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kudlo and unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Kudlo moved to accept communication number 08-03. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bertsch and unanimously carried.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Budget

- FY 2008/09 Budget: The Mayor vetoed the County's operating budget. Therefore, the County Council will need to resolve the matter before the end of the fiscal year. An update will be provided at the next Fire Commission meeting.

Alternative Funding and Grants

- FEMA FY 2007 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: (Video Teleconferencing Equipment) The committee continues to work on the design specifications in order to finalize and submit the bid proposal in July.
- FEMA FY 2007 Fire Prevention and Safety Grant: Status quo.
- FEMA FY 2008 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: Submitted grant in order to pursue the Health and Wellness program. The total budget is \$531,203. Anticipating a response toward the end of the year.
- State Department of Transportation Safe Highways Grant: Submitted grant to purchase Department Of Transportation OSHA approved safety vests. Grant application is for \$20,113.70.

Capital Improvement Projects

- Makalei Fire Station: The final foreclosure auction was conducted on June 5, 2008. The Judge ruled that the property would remain in Grammercy Corporation's ownership. The Fire Department met with the architects on the pre-final schematics.
- Pahoia Fire Station: According to the Department of Public Works Projects Manager, communications with the State DOT and HELCO is continuing in order to resolve the easement issue. The project's completion date is expected for late summer.

- Fire Administration and Support Facility: Met with the Police Department in order to finalize the floor plan layout for the proposed Emergency Communication Center. The basic floor plan was decided on. MACRO Engineering agreed that the current design would be compatible with the installation of hardware.
- Central Fire Station: The final environmental assessment was filed with the Office of Environmental Quality Control with the findings of no significant impact. This information was forwarded to the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Presently awaiting its review and approval to subdivide the parcel and transfer property to the County.
- Captain Cook Fire Station: The Department of Public Works has informed the Fire Department that it will be going out for bid this month. Once a selection is made, a timeline can be identified in order to relocate.

Promotions and Hiring

Active Recruits include:

Open-Competitive Recruitment

- Fire Fighter Recruit: The Department of Human Resources posted the recruitment announcement on Sunday, June 15, 2008. The closing date is Monday, June 30, 2008. Written exams will be conducted statewide by each county's Department of Human Resources during August 2-7, 2008. Following the written exam, qualifying candidates on the Big Island will be administered the physical agility test in Hilo, on September 20, 2008.

Chief Oliveira commented that the Fire Department would like to encourage and promote interest from the female population.

Commissioner Kudlo suggested advertisement with Consolidated Theatres.

- Ocean Safety: Hired two Water Safety Officer half-time positions. Also, filled five temporary Water Safety Officer positions for summer coverage.

Internal Recruitment

- Fire Equipment Operator: Recently completed the written exam. Preparing for the assessment center. Once a date is determined, the commission will be informed.
- Fire Captain: Recently requested testing for a number of vacancies. Testing will be scheduled for August 20, 2008, in Hilo and Kona. The Union questioned the circumstance under which the Fire Department considers recruitment. It was explained to the Union that the decision to recruit for vacant positions is based on the needs of the department rather than on who qualifies. It is necessary to balance the operational needs with financial responsibilities in the interest of the department and the community.

Emergency Operations Division

- **Missing Aircraft:** Working with the Civil Air Patrol and the Coast Guard in the search and rescue for a single engine aircraft occupied by one pilot and two passengers. The aircraft departed Kona International Airport at 10:25 a.m., on Tuesday, June 17, 2008. The flight plan filed was for a two hour flight to fly around-the-island. Once the aircraft was reported overdue, a coordinated search was activated. The area being searched is Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park and the surrounding area. At 12:35 a.m., the Coast Guard's C130 picked up a possible transmitter beacon signal in the eastern slopes of Mauna Kea. As a result, a team is conducting a ground search.
- **Volcanic Emissions:** Continuing to support monitoring efforts with the Civil Defense Agency and the Department of Health. On Friday, June 20, 2008, Chief Oliveira will provide a report to the Legislature on the monitoring efforts. The Legislature requested a report in order to consider solutions/remedies for the community. Also, Governor Linda Lingle is arranging a task force that may involve the Hawai'i Fire Department.

Ocean Safety report provided by Captain Chris Stellfox.

- Five temporary positions were filled for summer coverage during June 2, 2008 through August 16, 2008.
- Presently, there are two part-time Water Safety Officer vacancies in West Hawai'i and one in East Hawai'i.
- Kua Bay project: Pilot project for the Big Island. Hoping to receive appropriated funds for shoreline risk assessments.
- On May 28, 2008, support was provided to the Full Life Program for People with Disabilities at Kahaluu Beach Park. Anticipating the next event to be scheduled in September.
- On May 31, 2008, assisted with the Kona Triathlon.
- On June 7-8, 2008, support was provided to Kealakehe Project Grad program.
- Hapuna Roughwater Swim event scheduled for July 6, 2008.
- Big Island Junior Lifeguard Championship is scheduled for July 19, 2008, at Hapuna Beach Park.
- Summer Junior Lifeguard Program began on Monday, June 16, 2008. Youth age requirements are ages 12-17.

Support Services Division

Chief Oliveira mentioned that the Fire Department has regrouped the existing staff to assist with retired Assistant Chief Quince Mento's projects. Fire Equipment Operator Paulino Austria is working with Battalion Chief Michael Gahan and the Department of Data Systems on the communication system upgrade.

Communication Section

- Approximately 89 million dollars is needed to upgrade the Island Radio System. Met with MACRO Engineering Inc. representatives to prepare for presentation of the new communication requirements to meet the federal government's 2013 compliance deadline. Macro Engineering determined that 16 new towers must be built and the VHF technology needs to be replaced with 700 megahertz technology.

Emergency Medical Services Bureau

- MICT students went to Oahu to begin their clinical and intern rotations. Classes are expected to be completed in five months.

Training Bureau:

Operations Section

- 36th Firefighter Recruit Class: Expected to complete their EMT training this month. Graduation is targeted for July 30, 2008. A formal invitation will be sent to the Fire Commission.
- 37th Firefighter Recruit Class: Will begin EMT training on July 7, 2008. Currently, they are in driver training. Also, in order to familiarize the recruits with the functions, responsibilities, and the connection between the Support Services Divisions and Emergency Operations Division, the Fire Department has assigned them to Dispatch, Prevention, etc.

Volunteer Section

Chief Oliveira stated the Fire Department would like to improve on its recruitment for the Volunteer Program. It is necessary to involve media coverage.

Chief Oliveira mentioned that the Fire Department drafted a letter for its volunteers to present to their employers. The letter would ask the employers for their support to the Hawai'i Fire Department's Volunteer Program and inform them of the expectations of a volunteer. The draft copy was provided to Volunteer Firefighter Noni Sanford.

New Projects/Business

- Arson Canine Program: A demonstration will be conducted on the July 9, 2008, agenda.
- Fire Commission Attendance at the Annual Fire Chief's Conference: Presently, the Island of Kauai is the only County that was afforded funding for travel for its Fire Commission. It is necessary for the Hawai'i County Fire Commission to discuss with the Office of the Corporation Counsel whether attending would violate Hawai'i Sunshine Law.

According to Chair Okabe, in his experience as a member of the Police Commission, attending the Police Chief Conference was not a violation of the Hawai'i Sunshine Law.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Udovic responded that as long as board business was not discussed it would not be a violation.

Chief Oliveira stated that Maui County will be hosting this year's conference.

Commissioner Bertsch said that the conference is conducted for statewide educational purposes rather than a particular County issue.

Commissioner Browne inquired on whether the Kauai Commission would be attending.

Chief Oliveira replied that whether to fund the travel expense for the Fire Commission's Chair and Vice-Chair is being considered.

Chair Okabe questioned whether the Hawai'i Fire Department was able to accommodate the Fire Commission with its budget.

Chief Oliveira replied that it is possible to fund two members.

Employee/Public Relations

- Emergency Medical Services Week: Held on Sunday, May 25, 2008, at Liliuokalani Gardens. Proceeds will go to Alzheimer's Association-Aloha (Big Island) chapter and Project Lifesaver.
- 4th of July Pool Splash: Family event scheduled for July 4, 2008, at NAS Pool. The event will begin at 11:00 a.m. and conclude after the public fireworks display. The Fire Commission is welcomed to attend.

Chair Okabe inquired on the Dream Come True Program and whether Project Manager Eric Kunitomo would be able to address the commission.

Chief Oliveira stated that he would make the arrangements and place the presentation on an upcoming agenda.

Commissioner Kudlo replied that she spoke to Eric Kunitomo about the program. He informed her that there were issues with the change in management at the Keauhou Shopping Center and participating in the ice cream fundraiser.

Chair Okabe inquired on whether the individual who was nominated to the Fire Commission would be attending the July meeting.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Udovic stated that the new member is scheduled to appear before the County Council and will attend the upcoming meeting.

Commissioner Bertsch presented Chief Oliveira with a portrait of the Hawai'i County Volunteer Firefighters and thanked him for his support and leadership with the Volunteer Program.

NEW BUSINESS

- Mid-Year update on the Fire Department's strategic plan.

Commissioner Bertsch recommended that the Fire Commission defer the topic to the July meeting in order to brief and familiarize the incoming member.

The Hawai'i County Fire Commission agreed.

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) No report.

Training and Education (Kudlo) No report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

KAYCIE A. I. CARTER
Secretary