

**Harry Kim**  
Mayor



**Dixie Kaetsu**  
Managing Director

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Deputy Managing Director

## HAWAI'I COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION

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### **REGULAR SESSION - MINUTES** **August 8, 2007** **Liquor Control 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  
James Browne  
Karen Kudlo  
Karen Maedo  
Wil Okabe  
Henry Pomroy

Excused:  
Bill Rosehill

A quorum was present.

#### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Aaron Arbles	Tom Brandt
Kaycie Carter	Clint Coloma
Richard Fong	Glen Honda, Deputy Fire Chief
Laurie Kaneta	Darryl Oliveira, Fire Chief
Noni Sanford	Chris Stellfox
Mike Udovic	Ralph Yawata

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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 Okabe moved to accept the July 11, 2007, regular session minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Maedo and unanimously carried.

**APPROVAL OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioner Maedo moved to accept communication number 07-013 and 07-014. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bertsch and unanimously carried.

**INTRODUCTION OF 36<sup>TH</sup> FIRE FIGHTER RECRUIT CLASS**

Fire Equipment Operator Richard Fong introduced himself and asked the 35<sup>th</sup> Recruit Class, which started on July 16, to introduce themselves. They are:

Zachary Ah Chong	Cole Arrington
Christopher Berg	Lindsey Capellas
Matthew Ho	Gregory Houghtaling
Brandon Kagawa	Ashley Kanahele
Edward Kawasaki	Jeremy Manasas
Elijah McDanniel	Kyle Toma
James Wakefield	Clyde Willey

The Hawai'i County Fire Commission welcomed them.

- Introduction of Battalion Chiefs Ralph Yawata, Aaron Arbles
- Introduction of Special Operations Battalion Chief Clint Coloma
- Introduction of Captain Chris Stelfox with Ocean Safety

Captain Stelfox thanked Chief Oliveira and the members of the Fire Commission who were instrumental with the incorporation of the Ocean Safety Division with the Hawai'i Fire Department. He stated that the Ocean Safety Personnel display a positive attitude towards the integration. There are challenges to undertake. Basically, it is necessary to revamp the entire Ocean Safety Division.

Captain Clint Coloma introduced himself and stated that he was recently promoted to the newly created Special Operations position to oversee Ocean Safety, Rescue and HazMat. At the present time, the department is looking

toward future improvements. There will be challenges; however, there are always solutions to problems.

Fire Chief Oliveira, Captain's Stelfox and Coloma entertained questions by the Fire Commission regarding the Ocean Safety Operations. The discussion included the transference of part-time to full-time personnel, the conditions, incidents, and usage of Big Island beaches, etc.

## **CHIEF'S REPORT**

### Budget

- FY 2007/08 Budget: County Council approved effective July 1, 2007. FY 2007/08 budget disseminated to Commissioners. (See Attachment "A")

### Alternative Funding and Grants

- FEMA FY 2005 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: (Plymo-Vent) All stations have been retrofitted with system. Very pleased with the product. Appreciation to Captain Robert Alamedia, Gerald Kosaki, and Firefighter Neil Yoshioka who worked on this project.
- FEMA FY 2006 Fire Prevention & Safety Grant: Received notification on July 10, 2007, that the application was not funded.

### Capital Improvement Projects

- Pahoia Fire Station: Construction continuing. The foundation was laid and proceeding with the framing of the apparatus floor and living quarters. A newspaper article was recently published regarding the station.
- Makalei Fire Station: Projects Manager Desmond Wery and Public Works personnel met with the design consultant and the property owner on August 2, 2007, in order to address the consultant's concerns regarding the intersection. The consultant needed reassurance that no other development would be tied to the Fire Station's project. Currently, the Mayor's Office is drafting a letter to the consultant to alleviate any concerns.
- Fire Administration and Support Facility: Design contract awarded. Department of Public Works representative David Yamamoto advised Chief Oliveira that he hopes to have construction begin in 2008 and occupancy to follow sometime in 2009.
- Central Fire Station: Received the Mayor's approval to finance the requested funding for a full environmental assessment.
- Central Fire Station Retrofit Project: The main exterior roof repair and the upstairs interior plaster and paint work was completed.
- Captain Cook Fire Station: Immediately following last month's meeting, Chief Oliveira met with supervisors and staff in order to address their concerns regarding plans for the station. A memo was distributed to personnel. (See Fire Commission Communication No. 07-014.)

- Keaau Fire Station: Actively looking for a property in order to replace the current Keaau Fire Station. The Fire Department has outgrown the building with the incorporation of EMS and other services. The HFD is trying to work with the Police on a joint project to improve both stations. On July 30, 2007, Projects Manger Wery will be meeting with the County of Hawai'i's Department of Public Works engineer and Real Property Tax manager, to discuss prospective sites at Shipman or Kamehameha Schools.
- Honokaa Fire Station: No site has been identified.

#### Promotions and Hiring

Active recruits include:

#### Open-Competitive Recruitment

- 37<sup>th</sup> Firefighter Recruit Class: Recruitment closed on June 26, 2007, with 525 applicants. The COMPASS and interviews are scheduled for the first week in October.
- Water Safety Officer I: Trying to fill all existing vacancies. Also, the HFD would like to convert all part-time to full-time positions. However, until there is a recruit program, it is necessary to retain the part-time employees.
- Fire Radio Dispatcher I: Received certification list to fill two remaining vacancies. Interviews/assessments will be conducted later this month.

#### Internal Recruitment

- Battalion Chief's (Prevention Bureau): In the process of finalizing recruitment. At the present time, there is one applicant; will be conducting an administrative review this month.

#### Projected Retirements

- A report was distributed to the Commission which indicated that there are over 150 uniformed staff has 0-5 years of service, and there are 26 employees with 25+ years of service as of 2007.

#### Support Services Division

- Fire Auxiliary Services Bureau
  - Battalion Chief Michael Gahan, who recently filled the Fire Auxiliary Services Officer position, will be introduced at the upcoming Fire Commission meeting. Presently, he is attending a Live Burn Demonstration presented by Waterous and Burton's Fire on Kauai.

### Warehouse Section

- Working on the renovation of the warehouse in order to repair sections of office space, as well as improve the shelving/storage capacity.
- Received and issued two projectors to volunteer captains to facilitate training.
- Completed the delivery and issuance of 20 portable generators as part of the 2007 State Highways Safety Grant.
- Established a Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Committee to help with the purchasing of 240 new PPE's. The goal is to provide all operational personnel captains and below with two sets of Turnout gear. Committee will provide department with specifications to help purchase these products.

### Maintenance Shop Section

- As mentioned earlier, the mechanic shop is finalizing the PlymoVent up-fit project.

### Emergency Medical Services Bureau

- Battalion Chief Ralph Yawata is working with a steering committee to develop design specifications to purchase three new medics for the current fiscal year.
- Ocean View Fire Station received a donation of 20 new EKG units from the Ocean View Community Association.

### Prevention Bureau

- Received approval to participate with the Department of Health with the review of agricultural burn applications. Permits were previously issued without authorization of the HFD. There was cause for concern because the parties who were issued permits were not following safe burn practices. Therefore, the Fire Department requested that it be included in the process of reviewing and approving the applications. The Prevention Bureau's task is to meet with the prospective applicant in order to determine whether there are any safety issues.

Chief Oliveira stated that the Department of Health asked whether the Fire Department has the authority to intervene. In his opinion, when reviewing the Fire revised statutes (Chapter 132), there is a provision that grants the authority to the Fire Chief to prohibit any practices that would be deemed a fire hazard or threaten the safety of the community. The Office of the Corporation Counsel is working with the HFD. Chief Oliveira will keep the Fire Commission updated on the situation.

### Training Bureau

- Operations Section
  - Recruit Training

- 34<sup>th</sup> Firefighter Recruit Class: Completed the tactics and strategies section of the HazMat class on July 16-27. All 13 recruits are now certified HazMat Technicians. The next process will be their station assignments.
- 35<sup>th</sup> Firefighter Recruit Class: Currently in EMT-B training.
- 36<sup>th</sup> Firefighter Recruit class: Introduced earlier. Started out with 17 recruits. One recruit voluntarily resigned. There were a couple of injuries during Physical Agility Test training.

#### Volunteer Section

- Report provided by Volunteer Fire Chief Tom Brandt.
  - Volunteer Chiefs' Quarterly Meeting: The last meeting was held on July 21, 2007, at the Ocean View Fire Station. It was a very productive meeting. Chief Oliveira addressed some concerns raised about the new Fire Essentials Curriculum training.
  - Upcoming Volunteer Chief's Quarterly Meeting: Will be held on October 27, 2007, at the Puuanahulu Fire Station.

#### New Projects/Business

- Explorer Program: The Explorer Program ended on Saturday, August 4, 2007, with a total of twelve students. The Steering committee will meet in order to determine how to sustain and expand the program.
- Emergency Operations Center: The Fire Commission was provided an overview by the Civil Defense Agency's Plans and Operations Officer Neil Gytoku and Staff Officer Duane Hosaka following the meeting.

#### Employee/Public Relations

- Fifth Annual Employees and Awards Dinner: Event to be held on Friday, August 17, at Hilo Meishoin.

Commissioner Browne inquired on volunteer interest in Waikoloa.

Chief Oliveira answered that there hasn't been much success in finding individuals who are willing to commit.

Commissioner Okabe inquired on the lifeguard's starting salary.

Captain Stelfox replied that their beginning pay was an hourly rate of \$15.01.

Regarding the lifeguards part time status to full time, Commissioner Okabe asked whether there would be any half time lifeguards.

Captain Stelfox answered that the intention is to eliminate the half-time positions because it is not cost efficient.

Commissioner Bertsch noticed that Chief Oliveira's name was listed on the retirement report.

Chief Oliveira replied that the report was based on individuals who qualified and that he was not interested in retiring.

Commissioner Bertsch asked whether the administration was aware of who was interested versus who was qualified.

Chief Oliveira replied that every year a memo is distributed to the personnel in order to determine who is interested. Typically, there is an average of ten employees a year.

Commissioner Bertsch announced that Volunteer Fire Chief Tom Brandt was reelected.

The Hawai'i County Fire Commission congratulated him.

### **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**

- Fire Chief's Evaluation form – Changes and Suggestions.

Commissioner Maedo provided an overview of the formulation of the Fire Chief's Evaluation Tool/Process. (See Attachment "B") She stated that Chief Oliveira asked for an opportunity to receive feedback from the department. Therefore, the Fire Commission asked that this information be provided by the Fire Commission's October meeting in order for the Fire Commission to finalize the Annual Fire Chief's Evaluation by December 2007.

Commissioner Okabe distributed a draft copy of the Fire Chief Evaluation form (Attachment "C"). He stated that there were concerns about getting input from the community regarding the Chief's evaluation. Each

commissioner represents a district and may hear from the community or the rank and file. The proposed draft is similar to the Police Chief's Evaluation. Commissioner Okabe's experience with being on the Fire Commission as compared to the Police Commission is the fact that the Fire Chief presents an overview of the Fire Department and its strategic plan to new commissioners. The drafted proposal that he and Commissioner Maedo created allows new commissioner the chance to evaluate the Chief based on that presentation. New members may not have the opportunity to visit the stations and meet with the personnel. The drafted proposal allows those commissioners the perspective to simplify the areas of the evaluation more clearly, rather than the previous evaluation, which was in narrative form.

Commissioner Okabe recommended that the commission review the drafted proposal this month and have further discussion on this matter at next month's meeting.

Commissioner Bertsch suggested that Chief Oliveira add a report update on the strategic plan at the monthly Fire Commission meetings. He cautions having a numerical rating to the evaluation. He asked Commissioner Maedo to clarify whether she was requesting that Chief Oliveira provide rank and file input at the October meeting.

Commissioner Maedo responded that she would like input from the Chief regarding the draft document. Also, regarding a numerical rating, she commented that the Fire Commission responsibility is to rate the Chief. His responsibility is to make sure all of the stakeholders are in the collective process. It is a tall order, because of the strategic plan that the Fire Commission is so proud of. The Fire Commission is able to be a prototype for all the other departments because there is a successful performance-based measure that allows the evaluation direction to be clearer, and the commission can articulate it to the public.

- Familiarization with the Civil Defense Emergency Operating Center. The Fire Commission was provided an overview by the Civil Defense Agency's Plans and Operations Officer Neil Gyotoku and Staff Officer Duane Hosaka following the meeting.

## **PUBLIC STATEMENTS**

None

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday, September 12, 2007, at 10:00 a.m., in the Liquor Control Conference Room, Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i.

- Set agenda for September 12, 2007, meeting.
  - Fire Chief's Evaluation form – Changes and Suggestions.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

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KAYCIE A. I. CARTER  
Secretary