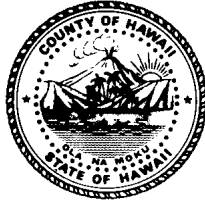


**Harry Kim**  
Mayor



**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**

**August 9, 2006**

**Liquor Control Conference Room  
Hilo Lagoon Centre**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

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

#### **ROLL CALL**

##### **PRESENT:**

John Bertsch  
James Browne  
Karen Maedo, Chair  
Glen Matsuda  
Wil Okabe

Excused: Neil Brazier  
Karen Kudlo

A quorum was present.

##### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Jason Armstrong  
Tom Brandt  
Kaycie Carter  
Richard Fong  
Glen Honda  
Laurie Kaneta  
Quince Mento  
Darryl Oliveira, Fire Chief  
Diane Noda, Deputy Corporation Counsel

*Hawai'i County is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer*

Commissioners: John Bertsch, Neil Brazier, James Browne, Karen Kudlo  
Karen Maedo, Glen Matsuda, Wil Okabe

**STATEMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS** (Open to the Public)

None

**STATEMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS** (Executive Session)

None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Okabe moved to accept the June 14, 2006, regular session minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Matsuda and unanimously carried. DISCUSSION: Commissioner Matsuda made an amendment to the minutes by correcting the date of the June meeting. It should be June 14 rather than June 13. The motion was amended to reflect the change and unanimously carried.

**APPROVAL OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioner Bertsch moved to accept communication numbers 06-011 to 06-013. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Matsuda and unanimously carried.

**INTRODUCTION OF 34<sup>TH</sup> FIRE FIGHTER RECRUIT CLASS**

Captain Glen Honda introduced himself, Fire Equipment Operator Richard Fong, and Firefighter David O'Neil. He asked the 34<sup>th</sup> Recruit Class to introduce themselves. They are:

- |                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Dominic Badis, Jr.  | Jack Moses, III    |
| La'akea Chang       | Daniel Okumura     |
| Christopher Hipsher | Matthew Pi         |
| Kalena Honda        | Christian Rosehill |
| David Kamalani      | Jamison Rosehill   |
| Ka'aina Keawe       | Chad Sohriakoff    |
| Jordan Lee          | Lyle Tamaribuchi   |
| William Melemai     | Chad Urabe         |

The Hawai'i County Fire Commission welcomed them.

**CHIEF'S REPORT**

Budget

- FY 2006/07: The budget was approved to include the following new positions:

- 1 – Account Clerk
- 1 – Information Systems Analyst IV (funded through Data Systems)
- 1 – Fire Captain -Volunteer Training (partial year funding)
- 1 – FEO (Driver Trainer) (partial year funding)
- 1 – Battalion Chief (Special Operations)
- 1 – Part Time Projects Manager

According to Chief Oliveira, the HFD received approximately \$79,000 for its Maintenance Shop to purchase heavy equipment. This will allow them to make their work environment safer and more efficient.

#### Alternative Funding and Grants

- FEMA FY 2005 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: Completed the bid specification and bid solicitation process. On August 8, 2006, Chief Oliveira signed the recommended bid approval of vendor form. Anticipating installation of the vehicle emission control system at the stations.
- FEMA FY 2004 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: FEO Mike Hayashida was informed by Draeger Safety that the burn trailer is scheduled to be completed by the end of September and delivered in October.
- FEMA FY 2006 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: Awaiting a response on the grant application submitted to purchase wildland fire safety shoes for all firefighters. Total grant application is approximately \$85,000.
- Department of Transportation-Safe Highways Grant: Submitted application for road safety system (generators, lights, banners, etc.). Total grant application is approximately \$30,000.

#### Capital Improvement Projects

- Makalei Fire Station: Received and accepted Architects Hawaii's fee proposal for approximately \$347,000. Work will begin once the Department of Public Works finalizes the contract.
- Pahoehoe Fire Station: Lowest bid was submitted by Isemoto Contracting at \$4.8 million. Allotment request was approved. Presently waiting for Notice to Proceed (NTP) from the Department of Public Works.
- Fire Administration & Support Facility: The design consultant selected will be submitting a fee proposal. Approximately \$1 million has been earmarked for the design cost. The property is located on the Mohouli extension above Komohana Street.
- Central Fire Station: Currently waiting for the Housing and Community Development Corporation of Hawaii's board to approve the transfer of land to the County.
- Central Fire Station Retrofit Project: At the present time, the Contractor is purchasing and assembling material and awaiting the Notice to Proceed (NTP) from the Department of Public Works.
- Paaui Volunteer Fire Station: Although the design funds are not yet available, the HFD is working with the Department of Public

Works-Highways Division to include its design requirements in the overall project plan.

Commissioner Bertsch asked if the HFD was considering using a “cookie cutter station design” rather than customizing each station.

In response to Commissioner Bertsch’s inquiry, Chief Oliveira replied that the goal is to develop a “one station fits all” template design. However, there are circumstances to consider, such as the shape of the property, topography, and even the mission of the station. These factors dictate how a station is designed.

Commissioner Browne asked whether the HFD considered adding living quarters to the volunteer stations. He said this would eventually allow a possible conversion to a paid station in the future.

Chief Oliveira answered that it would depend whether the site could accommodate the expansion. Although living quarters have not been placed in the volunteer stations, they may be considered for future designs.

Commissioner Matsuda questioned whether the selected properties have a minimum number of square feet.

Chief Oliveira replied that although there is a minimum of 1-½ acres, two acres is preferred.

Regarding the Pahoia and Paauilo Fire Stations, Commissioner Matsuda questioned why there was a delay in receiving the Notice to Proceed (NTP).

Chief Oliveira explained that the Department of Public Works needs to make certain that all the necessary requirements are acceptable. Thereafter, the vendor is notified and may proceed. At the next meeting, he will provide information to the Fire Commission on some of the benchmarks/hurdles involved in the process.

#### Promotions and Hiring

- Internal Recruitments include:
  - **Fire Prevention Inspector:** Completed assessments for Fire Inspector I positions. Three candidates were selected for promotion effective August 16, 2006. FEO Russell Lee and Firefighter Gantry Andrade are assigned to West Hawaii and Firefighter Robert Perreira is assigned to East Hawaii.
  - **Fire Equipment Operator:** Assessment held June 7, 2006.
  - **Fire Captain:** Assessment held on July 12, 2006.

Anticipating both Fire Equipment Operator and Fire Captain promotions to be effective on August 16, 2006.

- Open Recruitments include:
  - **34<sup>th</sup> Firefighter Recruit class:** The recruits who were earlier introduced; began on July 3, 2006.
  - **35<sup>th</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> Firefighter Recruit class:** Written exams were held and will be scheduling physical agility tests for September. Thereafter, a candidate pool will be established in order to identify candidates for both classes. Anticipating the 35<sup>th</sup> class to begin by the end of the year and the 36<sup>th</sup> class to begin in Spring of 2007.
  - **Fire Radio Dispatchers:** Four new dispatchers started their training on July 17, 2006. At the present time, they are scheduled for a familiarization of the Puna district and are unable to attend today's meeting. However, arrangements will be made to have the dispatchers introduced to the commission. The dispatchers began their first response training, and will be familiarized with button runs, operations, and geography of the island. Appreciation was offered to Deputy Corporation Counsel Diane Noda who provided her expertise to the dispatchers regarding the legalities involved when offering public assistance.

Commissioner Bertsch inquired on the extent of the training program.

Assistant Chief Mento replied that it requires a year of training.

Commissioner Okabe questioned what the average dispatcher's length of employment was and whether there was a lack of commitment to the position.

Assistant Chief Mento answered that the longest employed dispatcher's length of years were 25+. The department has within the past four years lost half of its staff for various reasons. Therefore, the HFD has acknowledged some deficiencies and is attempting to address those issues.

Commissioner Okabe commented that the Police Department and the Police Commission discussed the same concerns regarding its dispatchers. It is necessary to address the needs of the dispatchers.

Chair Maedo stated that it should be communicated at the "front door" on what the job would entail; sometimes individuals may come in with different expectations.

Chair Maedo mentioned that Commissioner Bertsch had asked whether the Fire Commission ever toured the dispatch center. Her response to him was that the Fire Commission had visited the dispatch center. She suggested because there are new commission members they should have a chance to do so.

Regarding the demands of the dispatcher position, Assistant Chief Mento replied that the department is upfront with all interested individuals, and arranges for them to meet with the present dispatchers to ask questions.

Commissioner Matsuda inquired on the number of dispatchers on duty, per shift.

Assistant Chief Mento answered that there is a minimum of two dispatchers and a maximum of four dispatchers, per shift. At the present time, there is a full staff of eleven dispatchers, which includes the five individuals that are on probation. Providing these individuals pass their probation, the department will be increasing its staffing level by next summer.

#### Emergency Operations Division

- No new updates

#### Support Services Division

- Auxiliary Services
  - Recently began training, fit-testing and distribution of the new MSA SCBA units in East Hawai'i. Will continue to distribute to all personnel.
  - Started distribution of new automatic external defibrillators to be placed in inventory on all line Fire Engines. Grant program in partnership with the American Heart Association. The AED's that are being replaced will be redistributed to different agencies or within the Fire Department.
  - Two fire mechanics have completed Mako Compressor service training in Florida. The training was organized through a partnership with L. N. Curtis and Sons, Ltd. As a result, the HFD is now able to service the Mako compressors (used to fill the SCBA and SCUBA tanks) without the assistance of outside contractors.
  - Fire Chief Darryl Oliveira, Captain Glen Honda, and the HFD's Chief Mechanic Glen Maesato recently returned from Wisconsin where they conducted final inspections of the Volcano and the Makalei fire engines. Anticipating delivery in the near future.
  - In the process of receiving another Type 42 Engine from the State's Forestry and Wildlife Division. It is yet to be determined where the vehicle will be assigned.
- EMS Bureau

- Laptops: The 15 laptops ordered are expected to arrive soon. The Electronic Patient Report Committee continues to conduct preparation and training. These laptops will support Patient Care Reporting (PCR) software, which will replace the paper ambulance report forms. Once the system is operational, a demonstration will be held for the commission.
- Training Bureau
  - 34th Firefighter Recruit class: Presently in its 6<sup>th</sup> week and half way through Firefighting Essentials.
  - 33<sup>rd</sup> Firefighter Recruit class: Currently completing their EMT I clinical rotation and is slated to graduate on August 18, 2006, 5:00 p.m., at the Mokuola Ballroom, Hilo Hawaiian Hotel. Invitations were sent to the commissioners.
  - Captain Glen Honda, Captain Gerald Kosaki, and Fire Equipment Operator Sean Somers attended an Incident Command System Instructor program. This will provide a train the trainer program. They will assist in surveying the present incident command training and certification needs. Recently, the department's radios have transitioned from using a 10 code to using a clear text. The reason for the transition was National Incident Management System compliance. It was necessary to utilize the concept of Incident command, which is clear text.
- Prevention Bureau
  - Continuing to assist the Liquor inspectors on the enforcement of occupancy codes at different establishments. The philosophy of the department is to work with the business community/establishment in order to help them comply with the code requirements. Also, working with Deputy Corporation Counsel Diane Noda on citation documents that will be issued for continued violations, especially when there is safety issues involved.

#### New Projects/Business

- Project Lifesaver: Participated in a week long training held June 26 to 30. Five Fire personnel are certified as instructors. Project Lifesaver is a non-profit organization from Virginia; program provides radio transmission devices for persons with Alzheimer and dementia. There is a 100% success rate. A partnership between the Fire Department, Police Department, Office of Aging, the Alzheimer's Association, and a number of other social services agencies is hoping to provide this program to the community. The Fire Department's role would be to have the actual receivers pick up the signal, should someone require assistance. It is necessary to educate the community about this project in order to provide the issuance of the transmission devices and the care of such a device. Councilman Holschuh provided funding for training and equipment.
- Fire Science (Rural Development Program): Continues to evolve. There are four classes planned for fall semester to include: Introduction to

- Wildland Fire Control, Incident Command & Disaster Control, Essentials of Fire Suppression, and Fire Hydraulics. This will be the first semester that these courses will be open to the public, and they will begin on August 21, 2006. The tuition continues to be waived, utilizing grant money, and the department will be working with the media in order to inform the public. This will allow people in the community to get the career exposure and get the fundamental certifications prior to employment.
- Ocean Safety: Continuing to meet with the Department of Parks and Recreation and HGEA to discuss incorporating/integrating the Ocean Safety lifeguards into the Fire Department. In the process of developing a project plan. Once the unions concerns are addressed, feedback from the members will be surveyed. One concern is regarding uniform and grooming (hair length). The Fire Department requires grooming standards, which will apply to the lifeguards, because there are safety issues involved. This type of requirement is necessary because the individuals will be working with equipment, which increases the possibility for potential injuries.

#### Employee/Public Relations

- 4<sup>th</sup> of July Pool Splash: Appreciation to Captain Ted VanGelder and the Station 2 personnel who arranged the annual event at N.A.S. pool.
- Annual Fire Department Fishing Tournament: Held on July 15, 2006. Over 30 boats entered. Fire Fighter Vern Hara won the tournament. Appreciation to Captain Lester Inouye, and FEO Garret Komatsu for coordinating the event.
- Relief Association East/West Family Get Together: Thanks to the Relief Association and coordinator Fire Fighter Darren Shimaoka, on July 16, 2006, a fellowship get-together and softball tournament was held at the Kona Airport.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Annual KTA/HIUW Bag Brigade: Currently, scheduling the event with the stores. Over the past four years, the Fire Department, in partnership with the Police Department, has raised over \$18,000 for Hawai'i Island United Way.

Per the Fire Commissions request for the statistics/figures of the Fire Department's salaries and overtime, Chief Oliveira distributed the information to the Fire Commission. (See Attachment "A")

Commissioner Okabe questioned whether the Fire Department still participated with the Dream Come True program for terminally ill children.

Chief Oliveira replied that the Fire Department has not participated with this program for the past three years. When former Fire Chief Nelson Tsuji retired, the baton was passed to other members of the department. Since then, it has not been pursued. He is unsure why, but can only conclude that it is due to a great number of other ongoing projects, as well as the amount of overtime going

on. The members have been involved with so many other events, and are unable to commit the manpower. Although it was a worthwhile event, he is unsure exactly why it was disbanded.

Commissioner Okabe stated that he participated in that particular program over 10 years, and it generated a lot of funds, it was also a positive program for the Fire Department.

Chief Oliveira replied that he would follow up with FEO Eric Kunitomi, who was the last person to coordinate the event.

Chair Maedo commented that the Fire Department does participate in numerous events which also generate a lot of funds.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Diane Noda stated that the agenda lists an update regarding the HOVE ambulance and the Puuanahulu station. She asked if he would give a brief update regarding these topics.

Chief Oliveira stated that the department is continuing to work with the community association in trying to correct some of the ADA issues. He visited the Puuanahulu Station and reviewed the list provided by the inspector on what the discrepancies were. At the present time, the department is trying to address those needs. He spoke to the original project consultant/architect, who will also be working with the association. The current association president came on board long after the building was completed. Therefore, Chief Oliveira decided to put them in contact with each other in order to expedite the project. The current association president will be working with the consultant closely.

Regarding the HOVE ambulance, Chief Oliveira stated that the county received a letter from the Carrus Foundation authorizing them to receive the donation of the ambulance. Deputy Corporation Counsel Noda is working with the community association on trying to get the donation agreement squared away and giving the Fire Department usage of the ambulance.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Noda stated that the Fire Department submitted the resolution to the County Council on August 8, 2006. Later this month, it will be proposed to the County Council committee to accept the donation. As far as the memorandum agreement between the association and the County, the county is waiting for their final approval on a few edits that they wanted, and then it will be circulated for signatures.

Commissioner Browne asked whether the Fire Department had given any thought to teleconferencing between stations on training purposes.

Chief Oliveira stated that the department met with the Department of Data System's Director Clayton Yugawa and the Rural Development Grant Program

Administrator, who is also helping with the Fire Science Program, in order to discuss teleconferencing the classes out to the community as well as the stations. The teleconferencing network would assist with communicating important health and safety messages such as civil defense updates, disaster preparedness, and even messages from the HFD staff. There is a plan, utilizing teleconferencing hardware, to set up a network within the departments to connect to each station, as well as the training center, and possibly to the Department of Transportation and the Civil Defense Agency. This is something that is being worked on. At this time, the department needs to get a cost projection on the hardware.

Commissioner Browne asked whether the commission would be able to help on acquiring this project.

Chief Oliveira replied that it is necessary to first get the cost projection, identify the sources of the funds outside of the county budget, and at that time he would approach the commission on whether they were aware of any sources of alternative funding they may pursue.

Commissioner Bertsch suggested using Internet web cameras.

Chief Oliveira replied that the department is considering teleconferencing because it has a better interaction and would not experience delays and the picture would not be jerky. It would maintain the interaction, especially with training.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Budget & Finance (Matsuda)  
Commissioners Matsuda and Bertsch will attend the next salary commission's meeting scheduled for August 28, 2006, in Kona. Commissioner Matsuda's presentation will include suggestions shared at the last Fire Commission meeting such as using a chart/poster, which will provide a comparison of the Hawai'i County Fire Chief's responsibilities in contrast to the other County's Fire Chiefs. The presentation will cover the geography of the island, the number of personnel, including the volunteers, the Emergency Medical Services, the future addition of the Ocean Safety Lifeguards, and an overview of the Chief's progress/accomplishments.
- Office Management and Staffing (Brazier/Okabe) no report
- Rules and Policies (Maedo) no report

- Public Relations (Browne/Kudlo)  
Commissioner Browne offered to help the Fire Department with their participation at the Waikoloa Village Neighborhood Watch event scheduled for October.
- Training and Education (Brazier/Maedo) no report

### **NEW BUSINESS**

None

### **PUBLIC STATEMENTS**

None

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday, September 13, 2006, at 10:00 a.m., in the Liquor Control Conference Room, Kona Center Building, 75-5722 Hanama Place, Suite 1170, Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i
- Set agenda for September 13, 2006, meeting.
  - Discussion regarding arranging an alternate date for the Fire Commission's meetings.
  - Consideration on the location of the meetings held in West Hawai'i.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

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KAYCIE A. I. CARTER  
Secretary