

**HAWAII COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION - MINUTES
AS AMENDED
September 8, 2004
Royal Kona Resort
Resolution Room
Kailua-Kona**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Brazier at 10:00 am.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT:

Neil Brazier
Dale Fergerstrom
Rudolph Hart
Karen Maedo
Glen Matsuda
Laura Ward
Clifford (Joe) Whitney

A quorum was present.

Excused: Stephen Bowles

ALSO PRESENT:

Kaycie Carter
Laurie Kaneta
Darryl Oliveira, Fire Chief
Martha Rodillas
Desmond Wery, Deputy Fire Chief

Commissioner Brazier stated that he received positive feedback from several individuals regarding the HFC and the operations of the HFD. He thanked Chief Oliveira, HFD administration, and HFC for a job well done.

STATEMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

None

APPROVAL OF MEETING PROCEEDINGS

It was moved by Commissioner Maedo that the minutes of the August 11, 2004 regular session be approved. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hart and unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Matsuda moved to accept communication numbers 04-040 through 04-052. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Whitney and unanimously carried.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Budget

- Open staff meeting held on Friday, September 3, 2004, educated staff on the budget process.

Alternative Funding & Grants

- DOT-Safe Community Highway Safety Grant: Received approval for submission request for \$10,000 to purchase 50 radio translucent spine boards to equip all ambulance units. Partnership project developed with Aquatics Division to have exchange program allowing lifeguards access to replace spine boards if incidents occur.
- Department of Homeland Security, Office for Domestic Preparedness: Applied to acquire a mobile fire and safety education program unit. Fire prevention and Safety Grant opened September 1 - 30, 2004. HFD anticipating purchasing a public education 40-foot towable trailer to target elementary school children and the elderly. This will provide education and training on fire prevention, fire awareness, and hurricane, earthquake and bicycle safety as well.

Capital Improvement Projects

- Puna Public Safety Complex: No new updates.
- Pahoa Fire Station: Captain Ahyo met with architects to discuss scope of services for (environmental assessment and building designs).
- Fire Administration: Received from Public Works a preliminary map on the proposed site just above Komohana Street intersection with the Mohouli extension and the Sunrise Ridge subdivision. The map was used in identifying the five acres needed by the HFD, subdividing it from the property currently owned by the State. The HFD is in the process of setting up a meeting with Mayor Kim and Managing Director Dixie Kaetsu to give a presentation on how

the property was selected. HFD will request for an executive order on acquiring the proposed property. An update will be given to the HFC at the next meeting.

- Kalaoa Fire Station: Captain Ahyo will be the HFD's liaison and will meet with project managers and County attorneys. Currently the contract is in negotiation between the County and the developer.

Promotions and Hiring

- Personnel Management Specialist II Ann Ignacio was hired September 1, 2004. Introduction will be done at next HFC meeting in October.
- 31st Fire Fighter Recruit class: Recruit class continues through Firefighter I training. An individual was significantly injured and hospitalized on the first day of physical training. HFD is currently waiting for a diagnosis and status report on the individual's injury/illness.

Commissioner Brazier asked what Chief Oliveira meant by the word significant.

Chief Oliveira stated that the individual was hospitalized for several days and was sent to a cardiac specialist.

Commissioner Fergerstrom asked what type of physical training was involved at the time of the incident.

Chief Oliveira stated that on the first day of class, all recruits are expected to participate in a three mile timed run and a series of calisthenics. The injured individual completed all of the events and then collapsed.

Commissioner Brazier asked if the individual checked out okay with the County physician prior to the physical training.

Chief Oliveira stated that the information collected in the physical is subject to how much the individual divulges to the County physician. Therefore, the HFD assumed that everything was okay. The HFD is currently waiting for the cardiologist and the private physician to discuss this matter with the County physician.

- Dispatcher: Currently in the process of conducting recruitment for Dispatcher I position. Currently there are five active Dispatchers, and three trainees. Resignation of one dispatcher was effective on August 31, 2004. Another Dispatcher is also contemplating resigning. Presently there are two vacancies by personnel on long-term illness/injury.

Commissioner Whitney asked if the resignations are due to stress on the job.

Chief Oliveira stated that because of the staffing shortage every dispatcher is working a minimum of 12 hours a day and six days a week. Chief Matsui and Vivian Akine are trying to cover shifts and monitor trainees. There needs to be

improvements in this area due to the loss in personnel. HFD is trying to expedite the training process with a specified curriculum and a training schedule.

Commissioner Matsuda asked how many dispatcher vacancies there were.

Chief Oliveira stated that there would be six vacancies, three of which are supervisory positions. The Department of Finance and the Department of Civil Service had suggested creating “ex-positions” in the County. This means being able to fill a position of a County employee who is not in service. Therefore, the HFD would be able to fill the current two vacancies by personnel on long-term illness/injury. This would allow the department to ensure adequate staffing.

Commissioner Fergstrom asked if the two positions created would be temporary.

Chief Oliveira stated that one position would be temporary, and the other position would be permanent due to that dispatcher was not able to return and is currently searching for another position within the County.

- FEO/Captain Promotions: Fire Captain promotions are tentatively scheduled for September 20 and 21, 2004. Assessment centers will be held for Fire Captain positions. The candidates have been notified and given an overview of the process. The assessment panel will test and evaluate their knowledge and experience on a scenario based exercise, and a written exercise. The HFC was invited to participate with a stipulation on attending both days of the event.

Commissioner Brazier asked what is the full cycle of the testing procedures.

Chief Oliveira stated that the HFD candidates written exam, experience and education, assessment center evaluation, and also a reference and follow up background check with supervisors and peers will all be part of the selection process, each having its own weight and value or “pieces of the pie”. This will create a fair process for a more comprehensive selection.

Commissioner Brazier asked if there is a minimum passing score on the written exam.

Chief Oliveira stated that previously when the Department of Civil Service administered the exam, it was 70 percent. The HFD is contemplating maintaining that or looking at a written score being one “piece of the pie”. If the candidate does not pass, they can possibly make it up in other areas of the selection process.

Commissioner Brazier asked how many candidates in the past have failed.

Chief Oliveira stated that he was unsure about the number involved but his guess was that it was not a considerable amount of individuals.

Commissioner Matsuda asked what rate is given in the written exam.

Chief Oliveira stated that he would provide the HFC a breakdown on what is shown to the candidates.

Commissioner Brazier asked what happens if the eligible candidates highest score was not great.

Chief Oliveira stated that all candidates would have to compete in the other areas of the selection process. In the past if the individual failed the written test they were not considered at all.

Commissioner Maedo asked if this process is still in concert with Civil Service rules and regulations.

Chief Oliveira stated that with the Civil Service reform each individual department is responsible for their own internal recruitment process. The Department of Civil Service administers the Civil Service exam and presents the HFD with the ranking scores. The selection process and mechanism used to evaluate and select candidates are left to the department.

Commissioner Fergerstrom commended the HFD for their selection process.

Commissioner Maedo asked what the minimum score of the rest of the events were.

Chief Oliveira stated that the HFD had not considered a minimum on the remainder of the events but that it will be a consideration.

Commissioner Maedo stated that if a minimum score becomes a reality then the candidate should know before hand what that score was.

Commissioner Fergerstrom asked if after the evaluation process is completed, would the promotions be based on the scores.

Chief Olivera stated that the candidates would then be ranked according to their scores. With the reference components it helps to remove some of the questionable subjectivity and put them in a ranking category.

Commissioner Brazier asked if there are reference materials for the candidates to prepare themselves for the written exam.

Chief Oliveira stated that the HFD had purchased a library of what the exams are based on. All individuals are advised if interested in studying for any exam, the materials are available for them at every station.

Commissioner Fergerstrom commended the HFD for their openness with the candidates and stated that their selection process should be applied throughout the County.

Commissioner Hart agreed with Commissioner Fergerstrom and stated that this selection process is also good for the Department's morale.

Chief Oliveira thanked them for their praise and stated that the driver's promotions would take place after the completion of the Fire Captains promotions. The HFC will be advised of the scheduled date.

Operations Division

- Barge Incident: Letters were sent out to different Industries, and correspondence is being returned back in regards to setting up preplan opportunities for personnel, future training and other partnership possibilities.
- Community Groups for Homeland Security Training: Captain Raymond Rowe, Fire Equipment Officer Roger Carvalho, and Firefighter Neil Yoshioka attended training sponsored by Western Community Policing Center on August 26 and 27, 2004.
- Community Emergency Response Team Program meeting held on September 7, 2004. Rural Development program at HCC purchased all audio/visual equipment for the CERT training team. Firefighter Keola Payao attended the Emergency Management Institute in Maryland and trained to be a CERT Program Instructor Trainer. Interested personnel will get instructor training and work with Hawaii County Resource Centers liaisons on identifying target communities to start the CERT training in October.
- Basic Peer Support Counseling & Critical Incident Response Team Training: Fire Equipment Officer Keith Laeha, Firefighter Ty Medeiros, and Firefighter Bruce Ferreira attended on August 23 to 27, 2004.
- Death Notification and Aftercare Workshop: One day workshop attended by Captain Raymond Rowe, Firefighter Michael Hill, Fire Equipment Officer Keith Laeha, Fire Rescue Specialist Jeffrey Loo and Firefighter Joseph Farias on August 30 and 31, 2004.

Prevention Division

- Hilo and Kona Prevention offices are on the County network. The Records Management System is now available to add comments and investigate into incident reports, also able to do queries and give statistics that are beneficial to the program. In the process of coordinating a pyrotechnics demonstration training session, a company from Idaho provides training nationwide for Code Enforcement Officers on how to properly inspect and provide enforcement on

pyrotechnic shows. To acquire this program within Hawai'i and have other jurisdictions participate and share costs would be beneficial.

Training Division

- Rural Development Program/HCC Fire Program: The Fire Science Program has been postponed to January 2005. Currently there are multiple events in progress and participation is very limited.

Volunteer Division

- Volunteer Chiefs Meeting: Held on August 14, 2004, at 10:00 a.m., Pahala Station 11.

EMS Division

- Ocean View Ambulance Service: Scheduled for implementation on November 1, 2004 for Basic Life Support Service in Ocean View. Document was sent indicating \$500,000 would be committed to the Ocean View Project to cover operational cost for the remainder of the fiscal year.
- MICT Class: Postponed to November due to multiple training events in progress.

Fire Auxiliary Services: No new updates

New Projects/Business

- ID Card Program: Implemented on August 31, 2004. ID cards will be issued for Fire Commissioners at the next meeting held on October 13, 2004. HFD will be implementing an accountability program to eventually assign each employee with two ID cards, a regular one and another for emergency operations.
- On Line 24-Hour Recall List: Judy Kaeo created an access data base that is available to all stations this will allow officers and personnel to query employees assignments and information.
- Meeting with Media and Corporation Counsel: Improvement on relations with media was looked at in creating a website for the HFD with one component being the media releases.

Public relations

- Fire Prevention Week: Scheduled this year to be held in West Hawaii. Fire Prevention Week interferes with Ironman Triathlon. Sent out email to stations in West Hawaii regarding considering postponing the date or returning to East Hawaii this year.
- 3rd Annual KTA-HIUW Bag Brigade: Began on August 21 at KTA-Kailua, and continues at various Saturdays at all six KTA stores islandwide.
- Daniel Sayre Foundation Dinner: Four Seasons Resort, September 11, 2004.

Commissioner Brazier asked if there were any final questions for Chief Oliveira.

Commissioner Fergerstom asked who drives and maintains the educational van.

Chief Oliveira stated that a partnership was made with HELCO to provide the truck to tow one trailer. The HFD is hopeful to get another truck as well. Public Works baseyard is likely where it will be garaged. HFD will need to implement a public education team who will volunteer to take this project on and participate in their community or district.

Commissioner Ward asked if the Kona Community Hospital's heli-pad had been down or are they creating a new one.

Chief Oliveira stated that they never had a heli-pad. The parking lot had been used in the past but it would always have to be evacuated before flights arrived. The HFD has met with the Director of the hospital and his assistants. They are committed to building a designated heli-pad. The HFD has advised them to build it big enough for military helicopters. The hospitals proposed heli-pad location have two issues that need consideration. First one being that the location is not fenced and another being that the transportation of the victim between the heli-pad and the emergency room is inadequate.

Commissioner Ward asked whom should the Kona Community Hospital contact at the HFD to inquire on present and future issues.

Chief Oliveira stated that they should send a written correspondence to the HFD.

Commissioner Ward asked if there were any future meetings that Director Ira "Lynn" Walton can attend so that he may inquire on hospital issues.

Chief Oliveira stated that he could attend the base meetings that are held monthly or the state has an EMS Advisory Committee meeting being held on Oahu. He will provide the HFC with those meeting dates.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Budget & Finance (Bowles/Hart)** None
- **Office Management and Staffing (Fergstrom)** None
- **Rules and Policies (Maedo)**
 1. Agendize for October 13 meeting: HFC rules, regulations, and term limits.
 2. Corporation Counsel Lincoln Ashida is reassigned to the HFC.
- **Public Relations (Ward)**
 1. Sayre Foundation Dinner on September 11, 2004 at the Four Seasons Resort.

2. Fire Rescue Specialist Matthias W. Kusch asked Commissioner Ward to thank HFC for allowing him to attend the previous meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC STATEMENTS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday, October 13, 2004, at 10:00 a.m. in the Liquor Control Conference Room, Hilo Lagoon Centre, Hilo, Hawaii.
- Set agenda for October 13, 2004 meeting.
 - Full commission review of HFC rules, regulations, and term limits.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Hart moved to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Matsuda and unanimously carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

KAYCIE A. I. CARTER
Secretary