

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

Phone: 961-8316; Fax: 933-1521

Email: Firecomm-agenda@co.hawaii.hi.us

### **REGULAR SESSION - MINUTES** **October 10, 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:**

Stephen Bowles  
Neil Brazier, Chair  
Karen Maedo  
Henry Pomroy  
Bill Rosehill

Excused: John Bertsch  
James Browne  
Karen Kudlo  
Wil Okabe

A quorum was present.

#### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Tom Brandt  
Clint Coloma  
Laurie Kaneta  
Denise Laitinen  
Noni Sanford

Kaycie Carter  
Michael Gahan  
John Kapsky  
Darryl Oliveira, Fire Chief  
Mike Udovic, Deputy Corporation Counsel

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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)

Maui Fire and Public Safety Commission Vice Chair Denise Laitinen introduced herself and asked to make a statement regarding the email she sent to the Fire Commission regarding consideration for an Annual Statewide Fire Commission Conference. She informed the Fire Commission that the newly formed Kauai Fire Commission and the Honolulu Fire Commission have expressed interest in developing a Fire Commission Conference. Commissioner Laitinen and representatives from Kauai and Honolulu's Fire Commission will be attending the Fire Chief's Conference.

Commissioner Laitinen asked whether the HCFC would be attending the Fire Chief's Conference.

Commissioner Rosehill inquired on the purpose of a commission conference.

Commissioner Laitinen replied that it would be mainly for networking and sharing experiences. It would be beneficial for the commissions to exchange information.

Commissioner Rosehill asked whether the other Fire Commissions have a regulations and rules manual.

Commissioner Laitinen responded that both the Maui and Kauai Fire Commissions are new and still developing their policies and procedures.

Commissioner Rosehill recommended that each commission review its procedures and determine what should be discussed.

Commissioner Laitinen replied that there would be an agenda with goals and objectives for the conference.

Commissioner Maedo said that she does not minimize the need for networking because it is critical. However, the HCFC tries to be cost-sensitive to the tax payer, and the commission would need to ask for financial support. At the present time, the members attend the Fire Chief's Conference at their own expense.

Commissioner Maedo agreed with Commissioner Rosehill that the goals and objectives of a conference should be clearly delineated.

Commissioner Laitinen clarified that the Maui Fire Commission does have rules and regulations. Their commission covers three islands and therefore has a travel budget. She is aware that both Kauai and Honolulu Fire Commission's also have a budget in place and asked whether the HCFC has a budget.

Commissioner Maedo explained that there is a budget for mileage and the members are offered lunch after the meeting.

Fire Chief Oliveira verified that there isn't a budget.

Commissioner Laitinen commented that at the present time this issue is just at the consideration phase. She also mentioned that the Police Commission has a Police Commission Conference and the Fire Commissions could research the Police Commission's practice.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Maedo moved to accept the September 12, 2007, regular session minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pomroy. Discussion: Commissioner Rosehill stated that he would like to make an amendment to paragraph 11, on page 6 of the regular session's minutes. He would like the minutes to state that Chief Oliveira indicated at last month's meeting that there was consideration to add a Fire Station in the Hookena area in South Kona. The motion was unanimously carried.

### **APPROVAL OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioner Bowles moved to accept communication numbers 07-015 and 07-016. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Maedo and unanimously carried.

### **CHIEF'S REPORT**

Chief Darryl Oliveira introduced Battalion Chief Michael Gahan, who was promoted to Fire Auxiliary Service Officer on June 18, 2007.

#### Budget

- FY 2007/08 Budget: All County departments met with the Department of Finance on September 21, 2007 to receive budget directives for FY 2008/09. Received a status quo directive. However, the department will be submitting a supplemental budget to reflect increased cost items that they would like included in the program budget.

Chief Oliveira advised the commission that the Fire Department will continue to request an increase in the travel budget to include funds for travel. The funds would also be used to send personnel to training opportunities in order the HFD's strategic focus on the pursuit of training and education.

### Alternative Funding and Grants

- FEMA FY 2005 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: (Plymo-Vent) Still conducting sporadic vehicle modifications in order for all the vehicles to be housed properly.
- FEMA FY 2007 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: Still awaiting a response for the grant application submitted on May 3, 2007, for video teleconferencing equipment.

### Capital Improvement Projects

- Makalei Fire Station: An article printed last month in West Hawai'i Today emphasized that the project was at a standstill. However, the Fire Department last month communicated to the media and the community members that there was a transfer of the property deed, and the original owner was retained by the new property owner as a consultant. The Fire Department recently received a letter from the new owner (GKK Makalei LLC) which indicated that they would like to continue their commitment to the project. At the present time, the department is meeting with the consultant to finalize the design plan phase. Also, the Mayor's Office is working in conjunction with the Department of Finance in order to finalize the transaction for the acquisition of the property.
- Pahoia Fire Station: Continuing as scheduled. Once roofing panel is completed, the interior work will begin. Target completion date is May 2008.
- Fire Administration and Support Facility: The project is in the design plan phase. Projects Manager Desmond Wery confirmed that a site survey is being conducted.
- Central Fire Station: Waiting for the Department of Public Works to secure an Environmental Assessment consultant in order to proceed with the station's relocation project.
- Central Fire Station Retrofit Project: The reroofing repairs were completed. At the present time, the department is awaiting an addendum to the contract for the replastering of the walls in the kitchen and the dining room.
- Captain Cook Fire Station: Received preliminary design plans from the consultant. The plan submitted showed a vast difference from the drawing that was left at the station. A request will be made to have the consultant specifically explain the turning radiances of the plan submitted. Chief Oliveira will be scheduling meetings at the station to brief the personnel on the plans being considered by the administration.
- Keaau Fire Station: County of Hawaii Real Property Division's Manager Harry Yada received a letter from Kamehameha Schools indicating its interest in partnering with the County on a possible site for a new station. They requested that further discussion take place among the Fire Department, Police Department, and the Department of Finance, because it will require a purchase of the property.

Chief Oliveira mentioned that on October 9, 2007, a meeting was held with the personnel from Four Solutions, Councilman Dominic Yagong, and Bishop Estates Land Manager Peter Simmons to discuss the Keaau Fire Station. Mr. Simmons indicated at that meeting that Kamehameha Schools would like to open up discussion for a possible site on a Honokaa relocation project.

#### Promotions and Hiring Active recruits include:

##### Open-Competitive Recruitment

- Firefighter Recruit: The physical agility test was performed for approximately 130 applicants on September 29, 2007. Out of 130 applicants, 29 were no shows and 71 passed. Interviews were conducted last week to identify candidates for the 37<sup>th</sup> Firefighter recruit class and possible recommended candidates for the 38<sup>th</sup> Firefighter recruit class. Department of Human Resources will be conducting open-competitive recruitments for two temporary Water Safety Officer I positions.
- Fire Radio Dispatcher I: The selected candidates who will fill the two vacant positions are being scheduled for their pre-employment physicals and will begin on November 16, 2007.
- Water Safety Officer I Class Specifications: As requested by Commissioner Browne at last month's meeting, the basic minimum qualifications for the Water Safety Officer I positions were distributed to the commission.  
(See Attachment "A")

##### Internal Recruitment

- Fire Captain: The applications were received and reviewed and have been forwarded to the Department of Human Resources in order to establish an eligible list. Written exams are tentatively scheduled for November.

##### Emergency Operations Division

- Prescribe Burn Project and Training Opportunity: Unable to burn on September 20, 2007, due to weather conditions. Will be rescheduling the project for the first week in November. An update on the project will be conveyed at the next Fire Commission meeting.
- Emergency Incident Notification: On Sunday, October 7, 2007, emailed an emergency notification advisory to all personnel in order to inform them of the recent water emergency incident that occurred in North Kohala.

## Ocean Safety Division

- Overview provided by Captain John Kapsky.

Captain Kapsky explained that the Ocean Safety Division is responsible for ten islandwide beach parks. There are six beaches in East Hawai'i and four in West Hawai'i. At the present time, the Ocean Safety Division is in the process of adding lifeguard towers to various beaches. The most critical is the Isaac Hale Memorial Park in Pohoiki, where there is also a need to assign four full time Water Safety Officers. There is also a need to create three full time positions for Hilo's Carlsmith Beach Park (aka Four Miles). Another critical area in need of lifeguard coverage is Kua Bay, which is a state park. In order to receive approval to create lifeguard positions for Kua Bay, the county would need to hold negotiations with the state to increase the budget. Another park issue that needs to be addressed is with Honolii Beach Park's parking because the entire parking area is the roadway. There is a concern with getting an ambulance through because the roadway is extremely narrow and there is limited parking.

According to Captain Kapsky, there are 40 Water Safety Officers islandwide, half of which are full-time and the other half part-time. The goal is to eventually convert the part-time positions to full time. There are three islandwide vacancies within the existing staff; two ½ time positions in Kona and one ¾ time position in Hilo. These positions are also in the process of being converted to full-time.

Captain Kapsky also informed the commission that the Ocean Safety Division is still operating out of the Department of Park and Recreation's facility and they are trying to secure two buildings adjacent to NAS swimming pool. The two buildings were once occupied by the National Weather Service Agency and were used as a back up generator station. Although it is not definite, he is aware of discussions held with the Airport Manager, the Department of Land and Natural Resources and the National Weather Service, who are in agreement of the procurement.

## Support Services Division

### Fire Auxiliary Services Bureau:

- Fire Auxiliary Services Bureau Battalion Chief Michael Gahan reported the following:
  - The FCCC is trying to develop a regular training schedule for the dispatchers, including allowing them to ride along in Medic One in order to observe and familiarize themselves with the Fire Company personnel's job duties.

- Battalion Chief Gahan attended staff meetings with the various departments to update staff on activities in the Fire Auxiliary Service Bureau and gather ideas in order to find positive and progressive movements for fire service.
- Battalion Chiefs Gahan and Yawata attended meeting with MACRO Rep John Eagler to identify any communication problems with Fire and EMS. Mr. Eagler said that the Hawai'i County Fire Department has the best communication system on the island. Mr. Eagler also requested the radio repeaters locations for MEDICOM.
- Dispatch Supervisor Karen Bugado conducted a PowerPoint presentation at the Hawai'i Community College to explain the 911 system.
- Battalion Chief Gahan attended the HGEA joint labor management seminar at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.
- Expanding the Support Services recall for the Warehouse and FCCC to include officers in the Support Division. Battalion Chief Gahan provided instructions for Emergency Assistance Personnel to help in dispatch during complex emergencies.

#### Warehouse

- Completed draft of new warehouse procedures. At the present time there is only one warehouse personnel. It is necessary to have an efficient system because there is a lot of equipment and monies being received and distributed. Fire Chief Oliveira decided to close the warehouse on Tuesdays and Thursdays to get a handle on the inventory.
- Received 38 new beds for stations 5, 16, 9, 18.
- Issued 250 face shields for the volunteers and 10 sets of Personal Protective Equipment.
- Received refrigerator and stove for both Kawaiiani and Hawaiian Paradise Park's Fire Stations.
- Issued 142 pieces of equipment and 70 pieces of Personal Protective Gear to the companies for the month of September.

Commissioner Bowles questioned how the inventory control was operated.

Battalion Chief Gahan replied that the when the orders are received, they are assigned a control number and then they are logged and filed.

Commissioner Bowles asked if it is a manual system.

Battalion Chief Gahan answered that it is manual and the department is trying to establish a system.

Chief Oliveira responded that the County's Fresh System has a bar code capability. Assistant Chief Quince Mento is exploring that project. Commissioner Bowles asked whether there is a purchase order sequence in order to track the item.

Chief Oliveira replied that it is being explored. The department is also considering its Records Management system capabilities.

#### Maintenance Shop Section

- The mechanic shop is busy with ongoing projects. These projects involve both the retrofitting/refurbishing and maintenance/repairs of the vehicles. Also, the department is assessing the mechanic shop's need for adequate staffing and resources.

#### Emergency Medical Services Bureau

- Medical Intensive Care Technicians: Recently, all nine interns returned from Oahu. They finished their fourth month of rotation and will continue with their fifth rotation in Kona. Battalion Chief Ralph Yawata and Captain Tracy Yanagi have identified eight candidates for the next MICT class tentatively scheduled for January 2008.
- EMS Supplies Storage Cabinets (15) were delivered.
- Will submit bid specifications this month for three replacement ambulances for Central, Pahoehoe, and Kailua-Kona Fire Stations.

#### Prevention Bureau

- All Prevention Bureau personnel attended Uniform Fire Code certification training on Maui, September 10-13, 2007. Battalion Chief Pacleb is working directly with the National Fire Protection Association Regional Representative to develop the amendments from each of the counties. In order to adopt the 2006 NFPA Fire code, the Attorney General's Office needs to review, revise, and finalize the draft submitted. At that time, it will need to go to public hearings and open forums as part of the adoption process.

#### Training Bureau

- 35<sup>th</sup> Firefighter Recruit Class: Currently in their EMT training. Due to the lead instructor's absence because of a family emergency, Captain Yanagi and Battalion Chief Yawata coordinated an interim instruction training program which allowed the class to stay on schedule.
- 36<sup>th</sup> Firefighter Recruit Class: Recruits successfully completed their Wildland Firefighting course. The prescribed burn training is rescheduled for the first week of November.
- 37<sup>th</sup> Firefighter Recruit Class: The interview process was conducted for 34 applicants during the first week of October. Their pre-employment medical screenings will follow in November. Tentative start date will be in January 2008.

### New Projects/Business

- Explorer Program: Continues to move forward. Eleven candidates will participate in the program which is currently scheduled to begin on October 13, 2007.

### Volunteer Section

- Volunteer Training Section status/update report by Captain Clyde Komatsu and Volunteer Firefighter Noni Sanford.
- West Hawai'i
  - Volunteer Stations are in Milolii, Kona Paradise, Kalaoa, Kona Village, Four Seasons, North Kohala, Waikii, Puuanahulu, Laupahoehoe and Paauilo. Anticipating an additional station to be headed by Bill Morris in Waikoloa.
  - There are currently 103 volunteers.
  - Implementing the Fire Essential training into the Volunteer program.
  - Milolii water pump back in service.
- East Hawai'i
  - Volunteer Stations are in Pepeekeo, Hawaiian Acres, Fern Forest, Fern Acres, Hawaiian Beaches, Waa Waa, Naalehu, Discovery Harbor, Pahala, Paradise Park, Volcano, and Kaumana City Estates.
  - There are currently 120 volunteers.
- Distributed 100 feet of one inch hose, rescue breathers and hot shields to each company. Assistant Chief Mento was instrumental in providing the equipment to the volunteers.
- Ainaloa and Kaohe Homesteads have expressed interest in starting a volunteer company. Information packets were distributed to the community leaders.
- 10 pagers were distributed through discretionary funds from Councilmember Emily Naeole to Paradise Park volunteers.
- Noni Sanford briefed the Fire Commission on a conference she attended in Alaska.
- Puuanahulu Blessing & Open House: Saturday, October 27, 2007, at 10:00 a.m. Volunteer Fire Chief's meeting will follow.
- Commissioners were reminded that they should not report complaints directly to the Volunteer Firefighters. Violations should be forwarded to the Fire Administration Office.

### Employee/Public Relations

- Fire Prevention Week: Scheduled for Saturday, October 13, 2007, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 at Hilo Bayfront.
- Open forums are being conducted with personnel to encourage participation.

Commissioner Rosehill questioned the objective of the control burns.

Chief Oliveira replied that Mike Robinson, who manages Hawaiian Homeland, approached the Mayor's Office with its plan to burn the seven acres of gorse. Chief Oliveira was called in to assist and partner the project. At that time, he asked both the Mayor and Mr. Robinson if the Fire Department could use the project as a training opportunity to have a hands-on exercise for the personnel.

Commissioner Rosehill inquired on the future of the land.

Chief Oliveira responded that Mr. Robinson would like to eradicate the gorse and replant with koa or some other type of a shade tree.

Commissioner Maedo suggested that the department consider sending the Volunteer Fire Chief to the Hawai'i Fire Chief's Conference.

Chief Oliveira agreed.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

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

After reviewing the document, Commissioner Maedo informed the commission that she noticed an error with the point ratings and the numbers did not add up. The tools should have a rating only for the purpose of giving the chair direction from each of the commissioners. It should be a guide for the Fire Commission's chair to aggregate input from all commissioners and then submit the one page anecdotal sheet. The other addition based on comments from the last meeting was with the schedule. Rather than choosing just one month, she revised it to allow the commission a two month time allowance for the following:

- January/February – Goals/Benchmarks to Commission
- October/November – Strategic Plan Update (Benchmarks met, etc.)
- December – Annual Evaluation by Commission.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Budget & Finance (Kudlo) No report.

Office Management and Staffing (Bertsch) No report.

Rules and Policies (Rosehill) No report.

Public Relations (Pomroy) Commissioner Pomroy requested that the Fire Commission send a thank you letter to Mr. Glen Kotomori at Gaspro for the helium tank donated to the Hawai'i Fire Department for its Fire Prevention Week celebration on Saturday, October 13, 2007.

Training and Education (Maedo) Commissioner Maedo reminded the Fire Chief that she was available to correct/edit any curriculum for the Hawai'i Fire Department.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- Consideration for an Annual Statewide Fire Commission Conference. (Requested per Communication No. 07-015)

Commissioner Rosehill suggested that the Fire Commission discuss and consider the matter at next month's meeting when the rest of the commissioners are present.

Commissioner Maedo asked whether funding would be included in the supplemental budget because it cannot be added to the fiscal budget. Until then, Fire Commissioners would pay out of pocket or not attend.

According to Chair Brazier, he received calls from two members who expressed a desire to attend. However, it would be a financial burden for them.

The Fire Commission agreed to defer the topic to the November meeting.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 14, 2007, at 10:00 a.m. in the Aupuni Center Conference Room, Aupuni Center, 101 Pauahi Street, Hilo, Hawai'i.
- Set agenda for November 14, 2007, meeting.

Chief Oliveira requested that he present the end of the year review on the strategic plan in December because he will not be able to attend the Fire Commission meeting in November.

Commissioner Maedo replied that she did not see a problem with that.

Chief Oliveira stated that he liked the idea of starting the New Year with the benchmarks. Unfortunately, it is not a fiscal year, it is a calendar year. However, he could do a wrap up of where the department is in the calendar

year process and sort of a review of the last five years for the new commissioners.

Commissioner Bowles requested that Chief Oliveira attach a summary of fiscal improvements from when he was hired until the present time. That way, the commission can see how the Fire Department has progressed financially.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Rosehill moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pomroy and unanimously carried. Meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

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KAYCIE A. I. CARTER  
Secretary