

**HAWAI'I COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION  
REGULAR SESSION - MINUTES  
November 10, 2004  
Liquor Control Conference Room  
Hilo Lagoon Centre**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Brazier at 10:24 a.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:**

Stephen Bowles  
Neil Brazier, Chair  
Dale Fergerstrom (10:24 a.m.)  
Karen Maedo  
Clifford (Joe) Whitney

Excused: Rudolph Hart  
Glen Matsuda  
Laura Ward

A quorum was present.

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Kaycie Carter  
Laurie Kaneta  
Darryl Oliveira, Fire Chief  
Martha Rodillas  
Noni Sanford

**STATEMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

None

## **APPROVAL OF MEETING PROCEEDINGS**

It was moved by Commissioner Maedo that the minutes of the October 13, 2004, regular and executive session be approved. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Whitney and unanimously carried.

## **APPROVAL OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioner Maedo moved to accept communication numbers 04-071 through 04-079. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bowles and unanimously carried.

## **CHIEF'S REPORT**

Fire Chief Darryl Oliveira presented Martha Rodillas with a lei and a gift. He thanked her for her support of the HFD, and for her past years of service as the HFC secretary.

Chief Oliveira stated that at the October meeting, Commissioner Ward acknowledged Kohala By the Sea for their Firewise recognition. The HFD is currently planning a formal presentation with a certificate to honor them. He would like to schedule this presentation for the December 8, 2004, HFC meeting to be held in Kona.

### **Budget**

- A formal draft of the Budget for the Fiscal Year 2005/06 will be submitted to the Department of Finance by November 22, 2004. Presently, the supplemental budget is being looked at with regards to what the priorities are for the next fiscal year. The targeted areas that need improvement are with the Training Division and the reorganization of the department. Some issues will include the difficulty that the department has in filling vacancies. Also, the University of Hawai'i and Hawai'i Community College have been unable to keep up with EMS training, due to staffing issues. The HFD is considering the possibility of administering the EMS training in-house under the University of Hawai'i and HCC's direction and program curriculum.

The HFD has also considered having specialized officer positions to coordinate and manage each of the specific function areas. These considered positions would be to create an EMS Training Officer, HazMat Training Officer, or a Special Operations Officer (combining HazMat and rescue), a Fire Service Training Officer who would conduct recruit training and ongoing requirements for existing staff. Another consideration would be to provide support to Captain Russell Enriques, who is administering training for 300+ volunteers in the volunteer section. A comprehensive package will be provided to the HFC at the upcoming meeting.

Commissioner Fergerstrom asked if the specialized positions created would be assigned to HFD personnel.

Chief Oliveira stated that not everyone is capable of teaching. The HFD would need to search for personnel who are knowledgeable and able to teach in their specialized areas.

Commissioner Maedo asked if the staffing issues would affect the HCC Fire Science Program.

Chief Oliveira stated the HFD has been working closely with the Rural Development program at HCC and in conjunction with the Honolulu Community College. They will begin offering certain courses next semester. The first class, will be the Wildland red card class. It will be scheduled to support the firefighters' needs for the first year. The HFD will assign paid and volunteer staff who are interested in attending the class. The attendees will benefit by enrolling in a University accredited course because, in addition to meeting the HFD training requirements, they will gain certification under a nationally recognized Wildland curriculum. The participation in this class will earn them a college credit to be used as the Fire Science program continues to expand.

Commissioner Fergerstrom questioned the cost of the course.

Chief Oliveira answered that the course is under the Rural Development program, which is part of the Inouye Grant. This grant is in negotiations to be divided equally among the four counties.

Commissioner Fergerstrom asked what the Inouye grant would cover towards tuition.

Chief Oliveira stated that the tuition would be covered for the next class. They will need to monitor the enrollment size to see if the funds would actually cover that. HCC will cover the instructors' cost and will waive the tuition with a certain number of seats per class.

Commissioner Fergerstrom asked if both paid and volunteer personnel would be waived.

Chief Oliveira stated that both paid and volunteer personnel's tuition would be waived.

#### Alternative Funding & Grants

- USFA Grant: No new updates to report.
- SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) Program Grant: Received approval by Congress for \$65 million for the next Federal fiscal year.

## Capital Improvement Projects

- Puna Public Safety Complex: No new updates to report.
- Pahoia Fire Station: In the process of drafting an Environmental Assessment to be completed by December 2004. Captain Ahyo is working with Architects Hawaii on the design of the fire station. Received approval from the Director of Finance to transfer funds within the department's budget to cover cost assessment submitted by Architects Hawaii. The Environmental Assessment of \$200,000 exceeded the \$150,000 appropriated for this project.
- Fire Administration: Met with Mayor Kim last month, who requested more details on the plans and the projected land usage in regards to property on Komohana Street intersection. A final proposal has been completed and will be submitted to him this month. Phase One of the project is primarily the Fire Administration and a support complex. Two other phases would include a warehouse and a fire station.
- Kalaoa Fire Station: Meeting to be held on November 10, 2004, with Office of the Corporation Counsel. Contract between County and property owner Mr. Dan Bolton will be discussed. An update will be given at the next HFC meeting.

## Promotions and Hiring

- Fire Radio Dispatcher III Promotions: Internal recruitment process closed on October 22, 2004. An assessment and selection process will be conducted.
- Fire Radio Dispatch I Hiring: Department of Civil Service will be administering an exam on November 15, 2004. An eligible list will be provided to the HFD.

Commissioner Brazier asked if there was a great deal of interest in these positions.

Chief Oliveira stated that they received about 40-60 applicants. He was informed that there was a big disparity between the Hawai'i Fire Department and the Hawai'i Police Department's response. The HPD has now removed the typing requirement from its eligibility requirements.

Commissioner Fergerstrom asked if typing was required by the HFD.

Chief Oliveira stated that the position does not require typing. The consideration in the selection process will be based on administering a multi-task scenario where the applicants will demonstrate their ability. These positions are not clerical positions, and having a typing requirement excludes individuals who are qualified candidates.

- FEO/Promotions/Assessment Center: Anticipating an upcoming Fire Equipment Operator Assessment Center.
- Fire Fighter Recruit Candidates: Continuing to receive background, character reference and employee background information on eligible candidates. Next recruit class target date is March 2005.

## Operations Division

- Ocean View Fire Station: Ocean View ambulance service started on November 5, 2004. Scheduled date was November 1, 2004, but funds had not been released from the State Department of Health. Was informed by Donna Maiva that funds were sitting on Governor Linda Lingle's desk and had not been signed. Met with Mayor Harry Kim and Managing Director Dixie Kaetsu on November 1, 2004, received an approval to proceed with county resources and be reimbursed later by the State.
- Volcano Fire Station: Continuing to work with the Hawai'i National Park to take over service on January 1, 2005. Received a \$250,000 appropriation from the Federal Department of Interior towards the purchase of fire apparatus.

Commissioner Bowles asked if the existing station would have highway access.

Chief Oliveira stated that there was a gate located behind the station.

Commissioner Bowles asked if the gate would be left open for access to the station.

Chief Oliveira stated that he would inquire with Randy Hart at Kilauea Military Camp regarding access through the gate because it is a Federal installation and there may be homeland security issues involved.

Commissioner Bowles suggested putting a chain-link fence below, so that it would be accessible from the highway and not interfere with KMC. The need for highway access would be beneficial for the public.

Chief Oliveira stated that was the reason they wanted to get off a Federal installation. The need to be accessible to the community is apparent since they need to serve the public. Realistically, the plans are to move the Volcano Station out onto the highway and seek areas near the current transfer stations. This would provide good coverage for Volcano Village through Hawaiian Acres.

- Public Works Project: Currently working with the Department of Public Works on the possibility of shared use of the Kailua Fire Station. Recently discovered an acre and a half of property there that could be made of use. Department of Public Works proposed creating a baseyard for their Traffic Division, to house light poles and other support equipment. However, with consideration to the Department of Public Work's needs, the HFD will also look at its interests as well. There is a need to create a West Hawai'i Command Center. This would include a command center for Battalion Chiefs, necessary classroom space, meeting rooms and a West Hawai'i support communication area (an alternative dispatch site).

Commissioner Maedo asked why the HFD was unaware of the extra property.

Chief Oliveira stated that the property was structurally built wrong. It should have been turned to face in the opposite direction providing better use. The footprint of the property shown to them misinterpreted the land usage.

#### Prevention Division

- UFC Adoption: Meeting with Office of Corporation Counsel on November 10, 2004, regarding the adoption of the '97 Uniform Fire Code.

#### Training Division

- 30<sup>th</sup> Recruit Class: Currently in clinical phase of their EMT-I portion. Scheduled for completion by December 9, 2004. Graduation is tentatively set for December 18, 2004, at Nani Mau Gardens, 11:00 a.m. Invitations will be sent to the HFC.
- 31<sup>st</sup> Recruit Class: Presently in their 14<sup>th</sup> week of recruit training. Currently going through driver training requirements and will proceed with temporary assignments to stations to gain experience.
- Fire Science Training Program: Targeting January 2005, with the delivery of the Fire 151. March and April 2005 will be the Fire 152 portion.
- Tactical Emergency Medical Services (TEMS) Basic SWAT Training: Partnership with Police Department, seven firefighter candidates were selected to participate as part of their special response team. They will be participating in TEMS training from November 29 through December 10, 2004.
- National Fire Academy: Inspector Alan Yagi returned from two week Plans Review for Inspectors course held on October 18-29, 2004. Personnel have significant interest in going to the Fire Academy. Want to continue to offer training each semester for eight individuals.

#### Volunteer Division

- Driver Training: Captain Enriques continues to work on driver training issues which are currently at 85% completion. Anticipating 100% completion by the end of the fiscal year.
- Petition by Naalehu Volunteer Fire Fighters: On November 9, 2004 a group of volunteer firefighters from the Naalehu company testified before the County Council to support the construction to the Volunteer Fire Station. It is necessary to house their trucks, equipment and personnel to better serve the community. Met with the individuals and offered encouragement to use that time to share the needs of community and the needs of the department. Goal is to have joint facility for its paid and volunteer firefighters. Currently renting house for ambulance crew. There is no dedicated fire company there and in long range, that will be a service that needs to get started. To build a facility to house both the paid and volunteer staff would also bridge the gap between paid and volunteer staff.
- Volunteer Fire Chief's Meeting: Scheduled for Saturday, November 20, 2004, at the Volcano Volunteer fire station.

## EMS Division

- MICT Class: Began on November 1, 2004, seven candidates will attend class.
- Fire Auxiliary Services: No new updates to report.

## New Projects/Business

- Hawaii Island Rural Health Association Conference: Attended conference on October 28, 2004. Will be working closer with community groups on using them with lobbying efforts on improving EMS issues.
- Hawaii Fire Chief's Association Conference: November 11-14, 2004, at Ritz-Carlton Kapalua Hotel on Maui.

## Public Relations

- Fire Prevention Week: Held on October 23, 2004, at the Old Kona Airport.
- Holiday Preparations: Firefighter Relief Association will host a station Christmas decorating contest. Fire Administration plans to participate in decorating the County Building. Commissioner Stephen Bowles offered his antique truck for the Waimea Christmas Parade. Soliciting participation from Commission members who would like to participate in the parade. Waiting to hear from Patty Cook, the coordinator of the parade, on what the rules and restrictions are. Parade scheduled for December 4, 2004.

Chief Oliveira stated that there was never any recognition of the original Hawai'i Fire Commission in regards to a portrait. The HFD would like to propose setting this up and also consider having regular pictures taken with commission members. The distribution of these pictures to the stations will allow the personnel to see who is serving as Fire Commissioners.

Commissioner Brazier asked where the Naalehu Volunteer Firefighters housed their equipment.

Chief Oliveira stated that there was never a facility in Naalehu for them to house their equipment. There were issues with security. The HFD approached the Police Department and received authorization to park their equipment at the Police Station's facility. The volunteers wanted it closer to where they live and it has been moved to a residential area. However, it needs to be located at a permanent facility, which would house all the equipment and provide staff housing and training.

Commissioner Fergerstrom inquired if there was information regarding violations of laws by personnel.

Chief Oliveira stated that there was nothing in the current rules and regulation that has reference to activity off-duty or on-duty. They are trying to incorporate that into the revision of the rules and regulations. They will try to cover off-duty behavior of the HFD personnel. The Union representative supports the revision of these policies.

Commissioner Bowles asked if these policies were also applicable to the new recruits.

Chief Oliveira stated that the recruits have separate rules and policies, in which their off-duty conduct is explained to them.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- **Budget & Finance (Bowles/Hart)** None
- **Office Management and Staffing (Ferguson)** None
- **Rules and Policies (Maedo)** None
- **Public Relations (Ward)** None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner Bowles encouraged all commissioners to seek out replacements within the community to fill vacancies. The present commission has accomplished a lot and he would like to see the commission continue in the same way.

Commissioner Brazier stated that he spoke with the Mayor's Executive Assistant, Wendell Hatada, regarding the public notice for interested individuals to apply for the County boards and commissions. The Commission is encouraged to make recommendations for any individuals they feel are qualified to be part of the commission.

### **PUBLIC STATEMENTS**

Mrs. Noni Sanford asked when the commissioner terms were expiring.

Commissioner Brazier stated that the HFC has a fact sheet, which states when each district term will expire. He will provide her with a copy.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday, December 8, 2004, at 10:00 a.m. in the Discovery Room, Royal Kona Resort, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii
- Set agenda for December 8, 2004, meeting
  - Presentation to Kohala By the Sea for their Firewise recognition
  - HFD overview for Year 2004

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

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KAYCIE A. I. CARTER  
Secretary