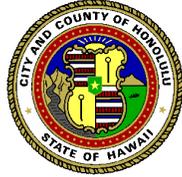


HONOLULU FIRE COMMISSION  
**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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STEFANIE LEE

WILLIAM HONG

Minutes of Regular Public Meeting  
Honolulu Fire Department Headquarters  
Honolulu Fire Department Auditorium  
Wednesday, February 21, 2018

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Wataru called the regular meeting to order at 2:06 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: James Wataru, Arnold Wong, Dr. Joseph Young, Charlotte Nekota, Stefanie Lee, and William Hong.

MEMBER EXCUSED: Max Hannemann.

IN ATTENDANCE: Fire Chief Manuel Neves (HFD), Deputy Fire Chief Lionel Camara Jr. (HFD), Assistant Fire Chief Scott Lawton (HFD), Assistant Fire Chief Ron Rico (HFD), Assistant Fire Chief Socrates Bratakos (HFD), Assistant Fire Chief Nathan Ramos (HFD), Battalion Chief Keith Yasui (HFD), Battalion Chief Sheldon Hao (HFD), Battalion Chief Daryl Evangelista (HFD), Battalion Chief Damien Kahalelio (HFD), Battalion Chief Paul Miguel (HFD), Battalion Chief John Pacheco (HFD), Battalion Chief Mark Nakagawa (HFD), Battalion Chief Craig Uchimura (HFD), Robert Lee (HFFA), Jolyn Prieto (HFFA), Frank Johnson (HFFA), Bill Thornock (HFFA), Randall Ishikawa (Corporation Counsel), Brian Ancheta (Corporation Counsel) and Nadine Murata.

II. PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON ALL AGENDA ITEMS:

Chair Wataru asked if there was anyone from the public who wished to give public testimony. Mr. Lee of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association introduced himself. Ms. Prieto from HFFA passed out a folder containing information in connection with Fire Chief Neve's annual evaluation, and Mr. Lee briefly went over the information with the Commission and highlighted certain areas of concerns.

Mr. Lee mentioned that the union had met with HFD regarding the Rank-for-Rank Recall Program adjustments and had come up with solutions that were agreeable to both sides. Upon a follow up Mr. Lee learned that HFD had decided against making its adjustments and indicated that it will continue to utilize temporary assignments to fill rank positions.

Mr. Lee went over another ongoing concern regarding Island-wide Fire Fighter I Balancing Consultation and referred to a letter from HFFA to Assistant Chief Rico dated February 8, 2018, indicating that consultation was incomplete and mentioned that a recap letter will be forthcoming to HFD. Mr. Lee indicated that there has been no response to date.

Mr. Lee lastly went over the Captains' promotional list. Mr. Lee mentioned that there are a large number of Captain vacancies, 35+ and HFD informed the union that they were not going to use the existing eligibility list for promoting Captains. HFD informed the union that it will only use the current eligibility list from the Department of Human Resources.

Mr. Lee voiced his concerns regarding not filling vacancies with promotions and asked the Commission to take into consideration some of these concerns while evaluating the Fire Chief.

Commissioner Nekota asked if the existing list of promotional candidates is eligible to be on the new list. Mr. Lee mentioned that those candidates would be eligible if they took the test in which case they would be placed onto the new list.

Commissioner Nekota asked if it was a problem in the past. Mr. Lee answered, "No".

Chair Wataru asked Mr. Lee whether, after the Rank-for-Rank Recall Program meeting when a solution was reached, if the union assumed that both the union and HFD had an agreement. Mr. Lee answered, "Yes" and that HFD's January 12, 2018 letter against making the discussed adjustments came as a surprise.

Chair Wataru asked about the current vacancies and how long is the list valid for. Mr. Lee noted that the list is valid for 2 years and there are approximately 35 vacancies

The Commission took a short recess at 2:26 p.m. and reconvened at 2:28 p.m.

Chair Wataru asked if there were any questions. Mr. Lee informed the Commission that he is free to answer any concerns they might have at a later date.

Commissioner Hong asked about the concerns regarding the evaluation of the Fire Chief. Mr. Lee informed the Commission that the union has filed a request with the State Office of Information Practices (OIP) to obtain Chief Neve's annual evaluations for 2013 through 2015, given the delay in response from the Commission in responding to the union's request under HRS Chapter 92F.

Counsel Ishikawa informed Mr. Lee that the Commission is receipt of the 92F request, and while it's not on the agenda for discussion, it will be raised at a future Commission meeting.

Chair Wataru asked if anyone else from the public would like to give testimony. There was none.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 21, 2018: Chair Wataru called for any comments or corrections to the minutes of the regular public meeting of January 21, 2018. There being no further comments or corrections the minutes were approved as circulated.

IV. BRIEFING ON HFD'S RESPONSE TO THE FALSE BALLISTIC MISSILE WARNING.

Chief Neves explained that the HFD dispatch had received a text message at 8:07 a.m. and had made calls immediately to the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HEMA) to validate that it was a true warning but received no immediate response.

Chief Neves mentioned that around 8:13 a.m. various fire stations also had received text messages and due to high volume calls a broadcast was made telling them to stop calling dispatch. At 8:18 a.m. a validation was made with the Department of Emergency Management verified that the missile warning was a false alarm. HFD issued a false-alarm message to the public at 8:20 a.m.

Chief Neves mentioned that during that time 2 fire companies were out on medical alarms and the department's decision was to allow them to continue service.

Chief Neves noted at from 8:07 a.m. and 8:18 a.m. there were no additional service calls. After the 2 companies completed their service they returned to their stations.

Chief Neves indicated that the department is meeting on a City level, including with City Council, to improve its communications and share information so that all dispatch centers are informed immediately. Chief Neves also mentioned that the department continues to work on the overall City Emergency Plan.

Commissioner Hong asked why HPD was notified of the false alarm two minutes after the warning was sent out and not HFD. Deputy Chief Camara indicated that HFD is not wired like HPD. Chief Neves mentioned that HPD gets it first because they're the 2<sup>nd</sup> State Warning Point. Commissioner Hong expressed his concerns that warnings should be simultaneous to first responders, including HFD.

Chair Wataru asked Chief Neves if HAZMAT is capable of handling nuclear fallout and if the department expects to expand that. Chief Neves mentioned their trucks carry a device that can test the ambient air and that they have experts in-house to cover radiological issues. Currently the department is in the process of retraining for usage of the testing device.

Chair Wataru asked about the Mobile Command Centers (MCCs) and if they have been used in an emergency and are up to date. Chief Neves noted that these auxiliary trucks are assigned to different stations and require regular checks.

Assistant Chief Rico mentioned that the MCCs are serviceable, but the department has not used them in any emergency.

Commissioner Hong thanked Chief Neves for the Fire Operations documentation requested. Chief Neves noted that documentation is confidential and should not be part of the public record.

Counsel Ishikawa asked Chief Neves for clarification and asked whether these documents are to remain confidential as they pertain to sensitive matters relating to public safety or security. Chief Neves answered, "Yes".

Chief Neves noted that the manual plan will be converted into a computer plan and this program will make decisions and recommendations for the department.

Commissioner Hong asked if their computer plan is the same plan that is used nationally. Chief Neves mentioned that this system uses historical data and dispatch will have the final say.

Commissioner Hong asked if this is will be available to all first responders or just HFD. Chief Neves mentioned it's for HFD.

V. REPORT OF THE FIRE CHIEF: Chief Neves passed out his monthly report and highlighted the following:

1. City Council Hearing. Chief Neves informed the Commission that the department continues to work on Bill 69 and mentioned that City Council held their own meetings with public testimony. Chief Neves informed the Commission that the next meeting will be in March.

Commissioner Young asked about sprinklers being on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor. Chief Neves mentioned that the department is proposing retrofitting for floors 10 stories and above. Their Residential Fire Safety Action Committee has narrowed the list of candidates for sprinkler retrofits to 150 building.

Commissioner Young asked about new buildings. Chief Neves mentioned that in new buildings it will be 8 stories (roughly 75 feet) and above.

2. Lessons for Hawaii from the 2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season. Chief Neves informed the Commission that a non-profit organization brought first responders and the military together and briefed them on the hurricane seasons and the lessons learned. Chief Neves mentioned that in Puerto Rico the first responders were taken care of with meals to make sure they came to work. Chair Wataru asked if those meals were MRE's. Chief Neves noted a company was contracted to provide solid meals, not MREs.

3. Meetings with the Department of Human Resources. Chief Neves mentioned that a new written test will be given and the announcement will be made during the summer.
4. Military Update Briefing to Employers. Chief Neves mentioned that a lot of HFD personnel are in the Hawaii National Guard, and indicated most of their helicopter pilots were trained from the Guard and now the Guard is asking to have them deployed. Chief Neves is working with the Adjutant General on keeping a baseline number of pilots on staff at HFD at all times, and has asked them if staggering of deployments and limiting deployments to 2 pilots at the same time are options.

The Fire Chief also reported on the following:

1. 103<sup>rd</sup> FFR Class graduation ceremony at 11 a.m. on March 16, 2018, in the Hawaii Okinawan Center's Legacy Room.

Chair Wataru asked about vacancies. Chief Neves mentioned that there are close to 140 vacancies, but they have doubled in recruit class sizes in response, roughly from 25 to 50. Chief Neves also noted that in December 2017, there was a much larger than normal group that retired; instead of 30-40, there were about 90.

Commissioner Hong asked how vacancies impact operations. Chief Neves said he does not like the vacancies, but he cannot hire personnel in advance of the vacancies actually existing. He mentioned that the vacancies currently being filled by overtime. Though HFD is currently using minimum staffing, with 3 personnel per truck instead of the preferred 4, Chief Neves all bases are covered.

Commissioner Nekota asked how many Captains have retired since last December. Chief Neves mentioned he didn't know off hand but mentioned currently there are about 42 Captain vacancies

Commissioner Nekota asked with the recent promotions how many Captains were promoted. Chief Neves answered, "3". Commissioner Nekota expressed that she would like to see those numbers go up.

2. During the month of February there were 2 consultations meetings with HFFA and 19 correspondences sent to HFFA.

Commissioner Nekota asked Chief Neves if he was in attendance in those consultation meetings with HFFA. Chief Neves answered, "No" and stated that he does not micromanage his staff. Chief Neves noted those meetings pertain to certain sections and the Assistant Chief in charge of that section will be the lead and if needed, Chief Neves will be present.

Commissioner Nekota and Chair Wataru agreed that they would appreciate having Chief Neves attend those meetings.

Chair Wataru noted Mr. Lee's earlier comment that HFFA thought the Rank-for-Rank Recall Program adjustment issues had been resolved, but HFD's January 12 letter seemed to reject that resolution. Chief Neves said HFD and HFFA need meaningful dialogue. He then went over the elements of consultation with the Commission and stated that there is no requirement that HFD concede or agree to anything in a consultation meeting, which is supposed to center on open dialogue. Chair Wataru said he wasn't at the consultation meeting, but there appears to be severe miscommunication given that HFFA had entirely different impressions of how the meeting went.

Chair Wataru asked Chief Neves if he had anything to do about rescinding the purported mutual agreement during the consultation. Chief Neves explained that he wasn't in attendance at the meeting and wasn't recapped on what had taken place. Chief Neves also mentioned that there weren't any new issues in consultation.

3. Chief Neves had each member of the executive staff give a brief description of their sections recent activities.

Deputy Fire Chief Lionel Camara Jr.- Chief Camara gave the Commission an equipment repair update. Chief Camara mentioned that the delivery of 5 new engines and 1 tiller aerial ladder is currently being assessed in the mechanic shop for any damages. After assessment, these engines will be going to the Kaimuki, Waikiki, Waipahu, Kahuku, Kalihi Kai stations, and the aerial ladder will be housed at the McCully station. Chief Camara noted that the next 5 engines will be coming in April.

Chief Camara went over repairs with the Commission and mentioned that the tiller ladder was sent out to Seagraves and its aerial sections are currently being assessed. HFD is awaiting feedback on estimated time for repairs. Chief Camara noted that Air 3 is currently installing its upgrade avionics package and once completed it will be reassemble and put back into service. Chief Camara indicated that the next air craft to be refurbished will be Air 2 in July, and it will be stripped down and rebuilt with a complete military reset.

Commissioner Hong asked if the maintenance scheduled on these helicopters is similar to commercial maintenance schedules. Chief Camara answered that they are services in accordance with military schedules which are more stringent.

Assistant Fire Chief Scott Lawton- Administration. Chief Lawton highlighted on the Occupational Safety Health Office. Chief Lawton went over Standard Operating Guideline (SOG) with the Commission and mentioned that this was initiated by retired Chief Young, and Chief Hooker has since taken over. Chief Lawton mentioned that SOG was based upon NFPA 1851, covering protective clothing/equipment, and noted that it hasn't been updated. Chief Lawton mentioned that SOG exceeds the NFPA and reduces the time personnel are exposed to carcinogens and it incorporates gross decontamination process, decontamination wipes and a

hood exchange. Chief Lawton noted that not many departments have a SOG and it has been in service for a month. Chief Lawton explained what a hood exchange is.

Commissioner Young asked about the exposure to asbestos. Chief Lawton stated that the HFD plan is comprehensive and includes multiple layers of protection. Chief Lawton then went over the decontamination process.

Assistant Fire Chief Socrates Bratakos- Support Services. Chief Bratakos updated the Commission on the recruit class. Chief Bratakos indicated that they are 3 weeks away from graduating and are currently undergoing HAZMAT training. The 104<sup>th</sup> class will be starting in April.

Chair Wataru asked if anyone from the recruit class dropped out. Chief Bratakos mentioned that they started with 51 recruits and are down to 45.

Assistant Fire Chief Nathan Ramos- Planning and Developing. Chief Ramos informed that the Commission that the department did a review of the memorandum of agreement with the Honolulu Emergency Services Department and they had requested that HFD conduct an automatic dispatch on second alarm fires but due to the number of frequency of calls the department decided to stay with the original memorandum.

Chief Ramos mentioned that the memorandum is a mutual support in which HFD will co-respond with EMS on priority incidents that are life threatening. Chief Ramos also noted that HFD co-responds with Ocean Safety at Ocean Safety's request and EMS will respond with HFD on incidents where HFD asks them to respond.

VI. PROCEDURE FOR EVALUATION OF THE FIRE CHIEF. Counsel Ishikawa mentioned that at the last meeting it was proposed that this form will be used for calendar 2018. Commissioner Nekota move to adopt the new form of evaluation and Commissioner Lee seconded it. There being no further comments the new form for evaluating the Fire Chief was unanimously approved as circulated.

Commissioner Young asked for clarification on the grading. Counsel Ishikawa went over the grading with the Commission and noted that the scale hasn't change.

Chair Wataru thanked the PIG for putting the evaluation together.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION- Annual Evaluation of the Fire Chief.

Commissioner Hong moved that the Commission go into executive session regarding the evaluation of the Fire Chief "to consider the hire, evaluation, dismissal, or discipline of an officer or employer or employee where consideration of matters affecting privacy will be involved" [HRS Sec. 92-5(a)(2)], and to "consult with the board's attorney on questions and issues pertaining to the board's powers, duties, privileges, immunities, and liabilities" with regard to

these matters [HRS Sec. 92-5(a)(4)]. The Commission went into Executive Session at 3:22 p.m. and the regular public meeting reconvened at 3:56 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT: The next meeting will be held on March 13, 2018, at 2:00 p.m., at the HFD Auditorium.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Nadine Murata, Secretary.

APPROVED:

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JAMES WATARU, Chair