

HONOLULU FIRE COMMISSION
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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VICE CHAIR

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CHARLOTTE NEKOTA

STEFANIE LEE

WILLIAM HONG

Minutes of Regular Public Meeting
Honolulu Fire Department Headquarters
Honolulu Fire Department Auditorium
Tuesday, January 16, 2018

CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chair Wong called the regular meeting to order at 1:37 p.m.

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

MEMBERS EXCUSED: James Wataru.

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), Chief Socrates Bratakos (HFD), Assistant Fire Chief Nathan Ramos (HFD), Battalion Chief Keith Yasui (HFD), Battalion Chief Sheldon Hao (HFD), Battalion Chief Lance Gaspar (HFD), Battalion Chief Mark Nakagawa (HFD), Battalion Chief Dave Miguel (HFD), Battalion Chief Jeff Hooker (HFD), Jolyn Prieto (HFFA), Bobby Lee (HFFA), Mike Kaneshiro (HFFA), Daisy Canite-Miyashiro (HFFA), Randall Ishikawa (Corporation Counsel), and Nadine Murata.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 20, 2017: Vice Chair Wong called for any comments or corrections to the minutes of the regular public meeting of December 20, 2017. There being no further comments or corrections Commissioner Hannemann moved and Commissioner Lee second that the minutes be approved. There being no further comments or corrections the minutes were approved as circulated.

APPROVAL OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES OF DECEMBER 20, 2017: Vice Chair Wong called for any comments or corrections to the executive session minutes of

December 20, 2017. There being no further comments or corrections the minutes were approved as circulated.

REVIEW OF DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS AT FIRE SCENE FOR PURPOSE OF RECOMMENDING IMPROVEMENTS TO THE FIRE CHIEF.

Vice Chair Wong asked if anyone from the public would like to offer testimony.

Bobby Lee of the Honolulu Fire Fighters Association introduced himself, referred to the testimony offered at the prior meeting and offered to answer any questions.

Vice Chair Wong asked Chief Neves if he had any questions. Chief Neves indicated, "No".

Vice Chair Wong asked the Commissioners if they had questions.

Commissioner Hannemann asked about resources being allocated and if they were an accurate portrayal of what took place during the Marco Polo incident.

Chief Neves said that the decision was based on the HFD's management responsibility and explained that the existence of more than one ongoing fire and the need to maintain coverage for the entire island were the reasons for the Chiefs being split up in different locations during this incident.

Commissioner Nekota asked Chief Neves if he was clarifying the decision or it was Chief Ramos and Chief Rico's decision.

Chief Neves stated that Chief Rico had made the decision.

Vice Chair Wong went over the time line of the Kalaeloa and the Marco Polo incidents and asked if resources could be pulled from one place to another.

Chief Neves explained the term "contained" and indicated that companies are not available until everything is cleaned up.

Chief Neves went over the extinguishment time of the Marco Polo fire and the release of companies. He explained that each air tank has a 45 minute capacity and that Chiefs Rico and Ramos would coordinate on whether additional companies were needed or whether off duty personnel should be called in.

Chief Neves indicated that there were options that the department could have used and said that he doesn't question the decision that Chief Rico had made.

Vice Chair Wong asked if the fire fighters had a break after the incident.

Chief Neves indicated that he's not sure what schedule they're on but mentioned fire fighters will continue to work till 8 the next morning unless they have a break.

Commissioner Hong asked about management decisions and if there's a written resource plan that the department is able to share with the Commission.

Chief Neves went over a relocation plan with the Commissioners and noted that the department is in the process of purchasing a computerized program called, "live mum" to help assist with decisions based on historical data.

Chief Neves indicated that the department has recently transformed their relocation plan to a computerized electronic format.

Vice Chair Wong asked if the Commission had more questions.

Commissioner Hannemann asked about statements made about Chief Rico.

Chief Rico asked for clarification.

Commissioner Hannemann asked about Chief Rico's presence at the Marco Polo incident and the messages he gave to the Battalion Chief's during the Kalaeloa incident.

Chief Rico asked for clarification.

Commissioner Hannemann asked about the secondary command post.

Chief Neves mentioned that this was a press release term made to the general public and explained to the Commission why it was used.

Chief Rico went over his duties and responsibilities with the Commission and noted the Fire Communications Center will text or call in the event a Battalion Chief goes out.

Chief Rico also went over incidents with 3 alarms and explained his role and what took place during the Marco Polo incident. He advised the Commission that he asked the Battalion Chief on scene if he wanted Fire 3 or the Mobile Command Center at the site. The Battalion Chief declined.

Chief Neves mentioned that Chief Rico is in charge of operations and the decision he made that day was the right decision.

Commissioner Young asked why all companies did not take asbestos precautions after leaving the Marco Polo incident.

COMPLAINT REGARDING UNION REPRESENTATIVES TALKING TO ITS MEMBERS AT FIRE STATIONS.

Vice Chair Wong asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to give testimony.

Bobby Lee from the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association gave the Commission an update on its status and mentioned that the Commission should have a copy of the Minute Order.

Vice Chair Wong asked Chief Neves if he had any questions. Chief Neves said, "No".

Vice Chair Wong asked the Commissioners if they had any questions.

Commissioner Hannemann asked about the number of complaints that the union has filed with the labor board.

Mr. Lee said that the union had filed 7 labor board complaints and out of the 7 they lost one which is currently being appealed. Others were withdrawn as they were either resolved or the complainants did not want to testify.

Commissioner Nekota asked if the complaints being filed are on behalf of its members.

Mr. Lee said, "Yes" its member's complaints to the union.

Vice Chair Wong reminded the Commission that any items relating to the labor relations board should not be discussed in public but in executive session.

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

1. Hawaii State Fire Council Second Quarter Meeting. Chief Neves mentioned that the department is getting ready for the legislation session.
2. HFD Station Visitations (7/1,003). Chief Neves mentioned that the department did a lot of exit interviews as there were a lot of retirees in December. Commissioner Nekota asked if Chief Neves if he personally went on station visits. Chief Neves answered, "Yes" and Chief Camara and other executive chiefs. Chief Neves pointed out that there is a listing of the locations that each Chief had visited with 90% being conducted by Chief Neves and Chief Camara.
3. Senior Managers Meeting. Chief Neves that it brings all senior managers together and different issues are discussed.

The Fire Chief also reported on the following:

1. During the month of January, HFD received 2 complimentary correspondences, and no complaints.

2. Chief Neves had each member of the executive staff give a brief description of their section's recent activities.

Deputy Fire Chief Lionel Camara Jr.- Chief Camara gave the Commission an update on the apparatus; 10 engines and 2 ladders which will be delivered in February and April 2018. Chief Camara mentioned that in February the department will be receiving 3 engines and 1 aerial ladder and the rest being delivered in April as the department could not get the rest in the shipment.

Chief Camara informed the Commission that the trucks that are out to bid are 5 engines and a quint. Currently there are multiple bidders and the department is hopeful to get a good price for the apparatuses.

Assistant Fire Chief Scott Lawton- Administration. Chief Lawton updated the Commission on the staffing within the department. Chief Lawton mentioned that 90 personnel had retired leaving the department with 140 uniform vacancies and 5 civilian vacancies. Chief Lawton indicated that the department will be having a recruit class for 50 in both April and in August.

Commissioner Hong asked if these numbers are normal for retirement. Chief Lawton indicated that this is a larger group as compared to the past.

Commissioner Hannemann asked if the recruit class is 50. Chief Lawton answered, "Yes, with each recruit class".

Commissioner Hannemann asked about total uniformed positions. Chief Lawton indicated 1,100.

Chief Neves mentioned that the department has conducted a survey and indicated that personnel usually leave within 25 - 27 years of service.

Chief Lawton indicated because of the study, the department holds 2 recruit class a year.

Commissioner Hannemann asked about the recent recruit class. Chief Neves noted that they are currently being fitted for uniforms.

Vice Chair Wong inquired about placement for the new recruits and if fire fighters can choose stations they would like to be stationed at. Chief Neves indicated that the department tries to balance out the openings and processes transfers.

Assistant Fire Chief Socrates Bratakos- Support Services. Chief Bratakos went over Bill 69 with the Commission and indicated that the department continues to work with administration and the City Council regarding retrofitting certain high rise buildings as well as Bills 101, 102, and 107 regarding financing. Chief Bratakos noted that the department continues to participate in

preventive interaction group panels and the department is currently proposing legislation through the State Fire Council.

Assistant Fire Chief Nathan Ramos- Planning and Development. Chief Ramos spoke about the grants program and indicated that they work closely with fire operations to identify any training or equipments needs they might have.

The Commission took a short break at 2:22 p.m. and the meeting reconvened at 2:25 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE HONOLULU FIRE COMMISSION RULES

Vice Chair Wong went over the process of the rules and corrected the draft rules to correct Sections 8.1 and 8.2 regarding complaints and indicated that the word “shall” in both sections shall be changed to “may”.

Vice Chair Wong asked if there was anyone else from the public who would also like to give testimony, there was none.

Vice Chair Wong asked the Commission if they would like to make any changes, there was none.

Vice Chair Wong called for a motion for the adoption of the Honolulu Fire Commission Rules. Commissioner Nekota moved and Commissioner Lee seconded. There being no further discussion the Honolulu Fire Commission rules were adopted as corrected.

REPORT OF THE PERMITTED INTERACTION GROUP ON THE PROCEDURE FOR EVALUATION OF THE FIRE CHIEF

Vice Chair Wong informed the public that the Permitted Interaction Group was comprised of Commissioners Nekota, Hannemann, and Wong.

Vice Chair Wong asked if there was anyone else from the public who would also like to give testimony, there was none.

Vice Chair Wong explained that the Evaluation of the Fire Chief for 2017, the Commission will be using the old form and moving forward a new form will be used in 2018.

Vice Chair Wong asked the Commission and Chief Neves if they had any questions pertaining to the Permitted Interaction Group. There was none.

Vice Chair Wong mentioned that adoption of the new evaluation form will be addressed at the next meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENT: The next meeting will be held on February 21, 2018, at 2:00 p.m., at the HFD Auditorium.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 2:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Nadine Murata, Secretary.

APPROVED:

ARNOLD WONG, Vice Chair