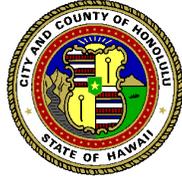


HONOLULU FIRE COMMISSION
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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CRAIG NAGAMINE

Minutes of Regular Public Meeting
Honolulu Fire Department Headquarters
Honolulu Fire Department Auditorium
Wednesday May 15, 2019

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Wataru called the regular meeting to order at 12:08 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: James Wataru, Stefanie Lee, Max Hannemann, Charlotte Nekota, William Hong, Dennis Morton and Craig Nagamine.

IN ATTENDANCE: Fire Chief Manuel Neves (HFD), Deputy Fire Chief Lionel Camara (HFD), Assistant Fire Chief Scott Lawton (HFD), Assistant Fire Socrates Bratakos (HFD), Chief Nathan Ramos (HFD), Battalion Chief Robert Thurston (HFD), Battalion Chief Mark Nakagawa (HFD), Battalion Chief Bryan Soares (HFD), Battalion Chief Paul Kato (HFD), Battalion Chief Jeff Sanchez (HFD), Battalion Chief John Bowers (HFD), Battalion Chief David Mergan (HFD), Battalion Chief Paul Fukuda (HFD), Battalion Chief Keith Yasui (HFD), Battalion Chief Jeff Hooker (HFD), Battalion Chief Jason Samala (HFD), Battalion Chief Sheldon Hao (HFD), Battalion Chief Daryl Evangelista (HFD), Battalion Chief Brett Mau (HFD), Battalion Chief Alan Park (HFD), Battalion Chief Joseph Kostiha (HFD), Battalion Chief Craig Uchimura (HFD), Battalion Chief Damien Kahaulelio (HFD), Battalion Chief Kendall Ching (HFD), Battalion Chief Jarin Wong (HFD), Battalion Chief Alan Carvalho (HFD), Robert Lee (HFFA), Bill Thornock (HFFA), Frank Johnson (HFFA), Andy Fukuda (HFFA), Jolyn Garidan Priero (HFFA), Daisy Canite-Miyashiro (HFFA), Brian Ancheta (Corporation Counsel), and Nadine Murata.

II. PUBLIC TESTIMONY. Chair Wataru mentioned that he would like to take the agenda out of order and proceed with item number IV as the first item for discussion and asked if there were

any objections. There was none. Chair Wataru asked if there was anyone from the public who wished to give public testimony.

Mr. Robert Lee of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association (HFFA) introduced himself and handouts were passed out to the Commission by Ms. Jolyn Garidan Prieto (HFFA).

Mr. Lee briefly went over a cover letter dated May 15, 2019, addressed to Chair Wataru and the Honolulu Fire Commission re: Agenda Item II, Annual Evaluation of the Fire Chief Manuel P. Neves.

Mr. Lee highlighted concerns that HFFA feels that the Commission should take into consideration while conducting its annual evaluation of Fire Chief Neves. Concerns regarding promotions, safety concerns, and fire fighter recruit training program were briefly highlighted.

Mr. Lee went over their time cost comparison chart reflecting former Fire Chief Silva and current Fire Chief Neves cost for overtime as well as an overtime cost chart that was prepared by Mr. Nelson H. Koyanagi, Jr. Director of the Department of Budget and Fiscal Services. Mr. Lee expressed concern that there might have been a mismanagement of spending in the department's budget.

Mr. Lee revisited a survey that was conducted by HFD in 2016 by On Trac Partners and asked the Commission to take the results into consideration while conducting their annual evaluation of Fire Chief Neves.

Mr. Lee mentioned that HFFA also conducted its own survey statewide and contracted On Trac Partners with assisted help from Market Trends. Mr. Lee informed the Commission that they are welcome to review the comments and asked if the Commission could take this into consideration while conducting its annual evaluation of the Fire Chief.

Mr. Lee asked if there were any questions, there were none.

Chair Wataru asked Fire Chief Neves if he would like to rebut.

Fire Chief Neves answered, "Yes" and mentioned that the department is proud of its program and it trains anywhere from 800 – 900 on the EMS program.

Fire Chief Neves explained that the department is a benchmark throughout the nation as well as its success rate compared to the rest of the nation.

Fire Chief Neves explained that the department will not lower its standards when it comes to community service.

Fire Chief Neves explained that when the new department administration took over it realized that the department was understaffed and, being an accredited institution since the year 2000, the department has to follow the standards of cover, which means the department needs to explain to its responses.

Fire Chief Neves explained coverage and staffing on engines to the Commission.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned that the department's budget has never exceeded its approved budget by the city.

Fire Chief Neves explained to the Commission the rank for rank and the need to give 288 hours of overtime whether it's needed under the collective bargaining agreement with HFFA.

Fire Chief Neves questioned if it is safety that the union is concerned about, then the department needs to pay for proper staffing.

Fire Chief Neves expressed that staffing and training is its greatest cost and it's the department's job to service the public.

Fire Chief Neves asked his administration if they had anything to add.

Deputy Fire Chief Camara explained to the Commissioners that in the year 2015 the department adopted an annual recall for training. Recall training is when a Fire Fighter (FF) attends training or recertification on off-duty time. By utilizing recall training, the HFD can maintain their standards of cover to service the public.

Chair Wataru asked what the mandated hours for overtime were.

Fire Chief Neves answered, 288 hours per rank person, which includes Fighter II's, Fire Fighter III's, Captains, and Battalion Chiefs.

Chair Wataru asked if it was automatic.

Fire Chief Neves answered, "Yes".

Commissioner Hong joined the meeting at 2:20 p.m.

Commissioner Nekota reconfirmed if the 288 hours is automatic and asked how many use the 288 hours.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned a little over 70%.

Commissioner Nekota expressed that looking from the outside, former Fire Chief Silva wasn't doing his job.

Assistant Chief Lawton added that the incremental raises that they received were not factored into the increase of cost during the previous administration.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned when your base pay increases, so does your overtime.

Commissioner Hannemann indicated that during the Silva administration there was a rank for rank in the year 2008 and 2009 and it was put on hold due to the economy.

Fire Chief Neves explained that rank for rank during his administration was specifically for vacation.

Fire Chief Neves indicated that the rank for rank now is vacation, sick leave, and vacancies.

Chief Camara mentioned that on July 1, 2014 it was an arbitration decision and Chief Socrates concurred.

Commissioner Morton asked if the 2 – 8 hours are contracted.

Fire Chief Neves answered, “Yes, that’s 12 24-hour shifts a year”.

Commissioner Morton asked if it includes the training.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned that it’s separate.

Chief Bratakos mentioned that there was a year when there were a lot of personnel retiring and it had generated more overtime for the department.

Fire Chief Neves went over the year when there was a number of retirees and explained how the cost of overtime affected the department.

Commissioner Nagamine asked if the department foresees the cost going down or will it be maintaining at that level with the overtime.

Fire Chief Neves answered that to meet the department’s objectives the department needs 4 – 5 people on the truck.

Commissioner Nagamine asked if there are any structural changes and could bring down the cost.

Fire Chief Neves answered, “To lessen the cost it would cut out services to the public”.

Chair Wataru asked if there any questions for the Fire Chief. There was none.

V. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF APRIL 17, 2019. Chair Wataru called for any comments or corrections to the minutes of the regular public meeting of April 17, 2019. Counsel Ancheta indicated that (a) the Commission’s approval of the March 20, 2019 executive session minutes had included adoption of his minor corrections, and (b) a “fuel usage” email received by the Commission had to do specifically with Colman’s fuel. He also noted several fixes to minor typos.

Chair Wataru asked Fire Chief Neves if he had any corrections, Fire Chief Neves indicated on the 3rd page regarding injuries, Waialua was misspelled. There being no further comments or corrections Commissioner Lee moved and Commissioner Morton seconded that the minutes be approved as corrected and the minutes were approved.

VI. APPROVAL OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES OF APRIL 17, 2019. Chair Wataru called for any comments or corrections to the executive session minutes of April 17, 2019. Counsel Ancheta noted that his minor changes to the executive session minutes had been forwarded earlier. Chair Wataru and the Commissioners mentioned that with these minutes were to be approved with these minor changes. There being no further comments or corrections Commissioner Lee and Commissioner Morton seconded that the minutes be approved as modified, and the minutes were approved.

VII. REPORT OF THE FIRE CHIEF. Fire Chief Neves passed out copies of his monthly report for April 2019 and highlighted the following:

1. Fires. Fire Chief Neves mentioned that there were 10 structural fires and highlighted a few. Details of the fire incidents can be found in the monthly report.

Fire Chief Neves went over an incident that took place at Hanauma Bay regarding a distressed fisherman and mentioned that operations that take place at night can be dangerous due to ocean conditions as well as what marine animals lurk at night.

Fire Chief Neves went over an incident on Dillingham Boulevard regarding an intentionally set fire to Office Depot.

Fire Chief Neves went over an incident that took place at Rainbow Place Condominiums and mentioned that this condominium did not have a fire sprinkler system and that there was one fatality.

Fire Chief Neves went over an incident that took place in Kailua regarding a helicopter crash. Fire Chief Neves mentioned that Chief Camara had dispatched himself and asked the Commission if they had any specific questions they would like to ask. There were none.

2. Hazardous Conditions. Fire Chief Neves mentioned that the department responded to 37 weather-related emergencies.

7 Arcing wires

7 Downed trees

10 Downed power lines

13 Water evacuations

3. Equipment Status. Fire Chief Neves informed the Commission that there are 8 frontline and 1 auxiliary apparatus that were out of service.

4. Vacancies. Fire Chief Neves mentioned that there are 96 vacancies and due to a recent graduation of 17 the vacancies within the department are down to 79.

Fire Chief Neves revisited a discussion that took place last month mentioning a new fire fighter recruits class 1 that will be starting in May. Fire Chief Neves indicated that it now has been pushed back to June 3rd with 45 - 50 recruits in addition to an anticipated fire fighter recruit class 2 with 20 – 30 candidates starting at the end of the

year.

5. Injuries- Report of Industrial Injury or Illness (ISWC). Fire Chief Neves went over the injury list with the Commission as well as the loss of time incidents.
6. Grievances. Fire Chief Neves went over the grievance with the Commission and went over pending grievances. Details are in the monthly report.

The Fire Chief also reported on the following:

1. During the month of May, HFD received 5 complimentary correspondences, and no complaint that was responded to. Details are in the monthly report.
2. Fire Chief Neves went over station visitations.

April 2019 (14/1,170)

3. Fire 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 went over Senate Bill 1303 and explained that 1046 Young Street are owned by the City and the City intended to transfer it back to the State but changed its mind and will be allowing the department to use the property as a future development site for a fire station.

Chief Camara mentioned that the department along with the DOE planning and development section will be working on the logistics.

Chief Camara mentioned currently the property is being used by the DOE transportation section.

Fire Chief Neves explained that the department has conducted a response study in the Ala Moana/Kakaako area for future growth and anticipates a need for another station in the near future.

Assistant Fire Chief Scott Lawton- Administrative Services. Chief Lawton gave an update on the Hauula fire station to the Commission with an anticipated move-in during the first week of June and first responses on June 24.

Commissioner Hoang asked for the exact location.

Chief Lawton indicated next to Tamura's Market.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned that there will be an informal blessing before the station conducts its service and a formal blessing will take place sometime in July.

Assistant Fire Chief Socrates Bratakos- Support Services. Chief Bratakos mentioned that there are 17 recruits that have just started and they have 4 months of probation in their first year as well as another 6 months as probationary Fire Fighter I's.

Chief Bratakos explained Bill 7 and Bill 96 to the Commission and mentioned that these bills provide public safety for the community as well as for fire fighters.

Chief Bratakos mentioned that Bill 96 passed and explained this bill was to clarify City Ordinance No. 18-14 regarding the retrofit of high rises and it allows for a little more time for buildings to comply and clarifies the evaluation that the buildings have to go through as well as allowing the architect and engineers to conduct their evaluation of sprinkler installation without going through an evaluation.

Chief Bratakos explained Bill 7 regarding affordable rentals in the City and County of Honolulu and mentioned that this bill allows buildings to be built with 6 stories in an apartment zone area in lots as small as 5,000 square feet.

Chief Bratakos mentioned that the department got involved with the Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) and the administration to make sure that the building has a sprinkler system, an alarm system and a ways out of the building. Chief Bratakos expressed safety issues for future occupants as well as its fire fighters to the Commission. He noted there was a loosening of restrictions, to stay safe while also addressing the affordable housing emergency on Oahu. The department was not completely satisfied with the bill, but it's a compromise that improves things overall.

Chief Bratakos mentioned that this bill has already passed and is currently waiting for the Mayor's signature.

Commissioner Hong asked what would be the impact of a 6-story building without elevators.

Chief Bratakos mentioned that it would mean one less tool for the fire fighters and a need for the fire fighters to climb up the stairs and carry people down.

Fire Chief Neves explained there will be more properties that will fall under this bill and the department will be facing challenges within the community in maneuvering its trucks as it will affect its decisions on acquiring apparatuses to accommodate the congestions of its community.

Commissioner Nekota asked about Americans with Disability Act (ADA) issues arising from the bill.

Fire Chief Neves indicated that it's a struggle for the department, but there are ADA workarounds.

Chief Bratakos noted that there is a 5-year sunset clause, so they will see how this new law works out.

Commissioner Hong asked what the response time is if there are no elevators and only stairs on a 6-floor condominium for a cardiac arrest.

Fire Chief Neves answered, the patient would be tended to in their living room or on the sidewalk.

Assistant Fire Chief Nathan Ramos- Planning and Development. Chief Ramos mentioned that the department is working with the Department of Land Management to look for additional parcels in the Kakaako area for future stations.

Chief Ramos mentioned to secure property in the Kakaako area the department has been working with the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA).

Chief Ramos explained that the House and Senate passed a resolution that directs HCDA to assist the department in finding a property in the Kakaako area.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Annual Evaluation of the Fire Chief. Commissioner Nekota moved and Commissioner Nagamine seconded 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 1:07 p.m. and the regular public meeting reconvened at 1:53 p.m.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Counsel Resolution No. 18-298, CD1 re: Fire Recruit Training and Testing Programs. Commissioner Lee moved and Commissioner Morton seconded that the Commission go into executive session regarding the discussion of Counsel Resolution No. 18-298 “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 1:54 p.m. and the regular public meeting reconvened at 2:05 p.m.

X. ANNOUNCEMENT: The next Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 26, at 2 p.m. in the Honolulu Fire Department Auditorium.

XI. ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business the Commission ended its meeting. It was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Nadine Murata, Secretary.

APPROVED:

JAMES WATARU, Chair