

SAN FRANCISCO FIRE COMMISSION

**FIRE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

Thursday, November 19, 2015 – 4:00 p.m.
698 Second Street, Room 102

The audio recording has been uploaded to the FC Website at:
http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=133&clip_id=24183

President Evans called the meeting to order at 4:09 PM.

1. ROLL CALL

Commission President	Andrea Evans	Present
Commission Vice President	Francee Covington	Present
Commissioner	Stephen Nakajo	Present
Commissioner	Michael Hardeman	Present
Commissioner	Ken Cleaveland	Present
Chief of Department	Joanne Hayes-White	Present
Ray Guzman	Deputy Chief – Administration	
Dan DeCossio	Bureau of Fire Prevention	
Richard Brown	Bureau of Fire Prevention	
Raemona Williams	Division of Training	
Tony Molloy	EMS	
Assistant Chiefs		
Bryan Rubenstein	Division 2	
Tom Siragusa	Division 3	
Staff		
Mark Corso	CFO	
Jesusa Bushong	Personnel Officer	

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Firefighter Kevin Salas spoke regarding funding for the Jaws of Life and if the Commissioners have ever seen a request for such. He described an incident involving a bus accident where the Jaws of Life wouldn't cut through the bus. He went on to express his frustration and anger and suggested that if there's a request for funding, they should buy some new jaws for the rigs and at least three or four backup pair.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES *[Discussion and possible action]*

Discussion and possible action to approve meeting minutes.

- a.** Minutes from the Special Meeting on November 5, 2015.

Commissioner Hardeman Moved to approve the 11/5/15 Special meeting Minutes.
Commissioner Cleaveland Seconded. Motion to approve above Minutes was unanimous.

- a. Minutes from the Regular Meeting on November 5, 2015

Commissioner Cleaveland Moved to approve the 11/5/15 Regular Meeting Minutes. Commission Vice President Covington Seconded. Motion to approve November 5, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes was unanimous.

There was no public comment.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please be advised that the December meetings will be held on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month at 4:00 p.m., here at Headquarters. (December 3, 2015 and December 17, 2015)

Starting in January of 2016, Fire Commission Meetings will be held at City Hall, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Pl, San Francisco, CA 94102, on the 2nd Wednesday of the Month starting at 9:00 a.m. in Hearing Room 416, and the 4th Wednesday of the Month starting at 5:00 p.m. in Hearing Room 400.

There was no public comment.

5. PRESENTATION FROM THE SURF RESCUE COMMITTEE [Discussion]

Presentation from the Surf Rescue Committee

Taken out of order due to technical difficulties

Captain Styles and Battalion Chief Castellanos's presentation is attached: <http://sf-fire.org/node/791>

Commissioner Cleaveland stated he appreciated the presentation and thought it was very good. He stated that the Surf Rescue program is a vital component of Fire Department Operations that we provide to the citizens of San Francisco. He asked if there is a certain time of the year where they have more marine rescues and need to beef up personnel. Chief Castellanos confirmed that it is constant year around. Commissioner Cleaveland also inquired as to what they are predicting for El Nino. Chief Castellanos stated that they are anticipating that El Nino would most likely affect boating vessels and fishing vessels. He added that they work alongside the Coast Guard, although the Coast Guard does not have rescue swimmers. Commissioner Cleaveland asked why SF Ocean Beach didn't have lifeguards year round. Chief Castellanos indicated it was because of funding and that lifeguarding is a seasonal position. Chief Castellanos expressed his desire to create a Marine Unit, in addition to the Surf Rescue Program, where he envisions a firehouse close to the water. Commissioner Cleaveland concluded by stating it would be a good idea to sit down with the Port Authority and their real estate people to discuss a location for a Marine Unit.

Commissioner Nakajo thanked them for their presentation and commented that they always enjoy the special Unit presentations. He added that he thinks the best way for the Commissioners to get educated and grasp the enormity of water rescue, is by presentations from the members who are performing the tasks. He continued that these kinds of projections on future planning are part of a strategic plan and it takes money and funding, but he would rather have a budget that pays for Jaws of Life or an extra truck. He thinks that it is also discussion that everyone is interested in, particularly because of the growth of San Francisco.

Vice President Covington thanked Chief Castellanos and Captain Styles for their presentation. She asked for clarification in the distinction between a Marine Unit and their recommendation for a firehouse on the water. Chief Castellanos explained that that

response is everything so a Marine Unit close to the water but not on the water where personnel and resources can be dispatched immediately. Their sole responsibility would be all activities that take place on the bay or in the ocean and that's all they would respond to. Because of the popularity and the number of activities that are taking place on the bay, that quick response would enhance our ability to assist citizens whenever getting in any type of aquatic emergencies. Our first priority, number one, is not a recovery mission, it is to save lives. A Marine Unit would make us more effective in saving lives.

Vice President Covington asked about helicopter rescues and who owns the helicopter. Chief Castellanos replied that they call the CHP when a helicopter is needed. He added that CHP are always ready to train with SFFD and they are very good. There is skill and technique involved in helicopter rescues and it is a quick way to get rescue swimmers to the site of the emergency. Vice President Covington stated she thought it would be good to highlight these services to members of the public. Vice President Covington also asked how Ocean Beach was determined to be the most dangerous beach in America. Captain Styles responded that the United States Lifeguard Association deemed it the most dangerous after 15 people drowned in 1998.

Commissioner Hardeman thanked them for their presentation. He went on to describe an incident he was involved in when he was a teenager and was swimming in Ocean Beach and got swept out from the pier ladder and got injured trying to get back to land.

President Evans thanked them for their presentation. She added that the work they do is amazing and incredibly dangerous. President Evans asked what the Units average staffing consists of. Chief Castellanos commented that if there's a surf rescue incident they need to have at least 10 swimmers to respond. President Evans stated that she thinks the Department should be working toward dedicated staffing for the unit, particularly during those heavy, spring, summer, and early fall months. She also supports hazard pay. She stated that while they are looking at the strategic planning process right now, a lot of these various issues should be addressed and given some careful consideration. Lastly, she stated that with regard to the dedicated Marine Unit, she thinks it is a very interesting idea and is something to consider as the city grows, particularly with TI and all the developments going on.

There was no public comment.

6. CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT'S REPORT [Discussion]

REPORT FROM CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT

Report on current issues, activities and events within the Department, including Fiscal Year 2015-2016 budgets.

Chief Hayes-White Chief Hayes-White's report covered the period since the last meeting on November 5, 2015.

In regards to the Budget, Chief Hayes-White mentioned she was awaiting instructions from the Mayor's Budget Office for the next fiscal year. She announced that they would be reconvening the Budget Committee and everyone who served last year has expressed an interest in serving on the upcoming Budget Committee. She also announced that James Reidy was selected as the Water Supply Officer and she thinks it will enhance our ability to fully monitor AWSS. She touched on other changes in personnel, setting up interviews for positions that were budgeted for the Department and putting together a hiring/staffing plan. She addressed the upcoming retirements that they are anticipating and gaining some ground from the years that they weren't able to hire for those that had retired.

Chief Hayes-White talked about the 118th Academy class and stated they will be graduating on December 18, 2015. She stated that they are projecting the 119th Academy will start on January 25, 2016 and be comprised of 54 recruits, 42 off the eligible list and 12 from Station 49.

Chief Hayes-White touched briefly on the status of the H-8's, and acknowledged all the good work that everyone has done to get them on board, particularly Tony Molloy, who has really stepped up to get us to where we are in the H-8 process.

Chief Hayes-White discussed members' concerns at the Airport regarding the rebuild of Station 3. They are addressing the issues and have hired an independent third party to do air quality and noise studies.

She talked about the Veteran's Day Parade, American Legion Post 456 dinner, and the Salvation Army luncheon that she and other members attended. She added that Firefighter Adam Wood and Firefighter Greg Collaco were honored at the American Legion Post 456 dinner for their incredible act of courage during a fire at 24th and Treat.

Chief Hayes-White confirmed that they are still actively looking at whether the training facility can remain at the current location or identify another area on Treasure Island or in the City.

Commissioner Nakajo asked for clarification on the class makeup for the 119 Academy class that will start on January 25, 2016. Chief Hayes-White explained it will be a class for 54, 12 from Station 49 and 42 off the eligible list. Sixteen are currently going through medicals and backgrounds.

Commissioner Cleaveland asked if the H-8's are going to be deployed for the Super Bowl event. Chief Gonzales stated that they are relying on voluntary overtime and will offer it to current members first and if there are still some shifts available they will tap into the H-8's. He added that the Department is prepared and committed to have abundant staffing for the event.

Commissioner Cleaveland inquired about the Health Bond Committee and he said that he would be interested in participating, and getting the monies needed to build a new EMS headquarters. He also suggested keeping the Treasure Inland Training Facility on the front burner.

Vice President Covington asked the Chief to touch on the challenges with the Jaws of Life. Chief Hayes-White stated Chief Guzman would be addressing that in his report. Vice President Covington also asked if the Director of Capital Planning has been invited to present at a future Commission meeting. Chief Hayes-White suggested it would be more practical to ask him to present when we move to City Hall for our meetings.

Vice President Covington also asked how the search for a Nurse Practitioner is going. Jesusa Bushong answered that there have been challenges in terms of getting qualified applicants for the nurse practitioner, because they are looking for the occupational health certificate but in the last month they posted in some professional journals; California Association of Nursing Health Practitioners,. Since then, they have received about seven new resumes, which Dr. Terrazas has for review.

President Evans asked for a copy of the report from the Industrial Hygienist at the Airport. Chief Hayes-White said she would share it once she received it.

REPORT FROM ADMINISTRATION

Report on the Administrative Divisions, Fleet and Facility status, Finance and Support Services within the Department.

Chief Guzman presented his administrative report for the month of November, 2015.

- Support Services Division continues to manage all of our ESER 2010 projects. All roof, window, mechanical, and exterior envelope projects are complete.

1. Pump Station 1 project at headquarters continues and hopefully will be done in March of 2016. We're replacing four generators that power our four pumps in the basement along with the emergency generator. Station 16 permits are currently under review with an anticipated start date of the fall of 2016.
 2. Station 5, structure documents continue to be developed with an anticipated start of late fall, 2016. We've received four bids for our two new rescue squads. That should be awarded by the end of this month. And we've been working with Central Shops on our new engine specs to reduce the profile and keeping our commitment to Vision Zero.
 3. The Health and Safety Bond, 2016, meetings have been ongoing for about a year and a half now. We are requesting 44 million and still shooting for June of 2016 to put the Bond on the ballot.
- Division of Training, Chief Williams and her staff are very busy with the 118th academy class. They're in the 13th of a 17-week academy. We're down 12 recruits, Nine from Station 49 and three from the list. They are scheduled to graduate December 18th. With regard to the high failure rate of Station 49, the Administration, Chief of Department, and Local 798 have come together to put in an assessment program prior to entering the academy, to see if will benefit members from station 49. Division of Training is also conducting one-year testing for 117th recruit academy.
 - Division of Homeland Security. Chief Francisco has been very busy with planning for Super Bowl 50.
 - To Vice President Covington's question about hydraulic rescue tools, we have requested rescue tools in the past as part of our annual equipment request. However, these requests are lumped together with apparatus, PPE, defibrillators, PWSS, and SCBA. We continue to ask for more support with financing and we always try to get grants. In 2014, the AFG grant we put in for 25 hydraulic units to the tune of \$754,000. We received notice three weeks ago that we were denied for that request. We will continue to apply for these AFG grants. Since 2014 we've been trying to do everything we can to get the new hydraulic tools that are on the market. We have negotiated to launch a pilot program to begin December 14th with Hearst and Homacho. They've agreed to do a six-month pilot program where we will place one set of Jaws on Rescue One, another set on Rescue Two. After three months we'll swap those units and at the end of six month trial, we will do a poll and see which unit is best for our needs. But we will have more rescue tools in the system very shortly.
 - Fireboat update: There have been challenges with Vigor's electrical contract and it went out of business. We hope to receive TIA, (Time and Impact Analysis) report by the end of this week from Jensen Marine who is the construction manager for that project. Once we get that TIA, we'll be able to sit down and determine what the impacts of that delay will be, but right now we just don't know.

- A milestone happened with that project where the pilot house is now made into the main body of the vessel. So that project continues to move forward as best as it can.
- Investigative Services -- Acting Captain Sheila Hunter conducted 31 random alcohol and drug tests this recording period, five of which were conducted on nights or weekends. She has also been busy conducting background investigations for the 119th recruit academy. The assignment office has been busy with assignment changes.

Commission Cleaveland asked why there was such a high failure rate from the 118th Academy. Chief Guzman responded that it was a variety of issues, including injury, family reasons, resignations and for not meeting the standards of the training.

There was no public comment.

7. UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE
[Discussion]

Vice President Covington gave the following update:

To be brief, there have been a number of ongoing meetings with city leaders and members of the Steering Committee. Yesterday, the Chief of the Department, the Mayor's Chief of Staff, the City's Protocol Chief, a couple of members of the San Francisco Fire Department staff, and Dave Ebarle who is serving as co-chair of the Steering Committee and myself all met, to go over the nine-month-long celebration and we had a very good discussion. Fund raising has begun, and I would personally like to thank Commissioner Cleveland for spearheading the gift of \$5,000 from BOMA to sponsor the Lilly Coit and volunteer day. So thank you again, Commissioner Cleveland, for your leadership on that. And I also want to thank Commissioner Nakajo for working very closely with me on the firefighter and paramedic film festival. We're making good progress. And we will be reaching out to members of the Department to ask them to join the various committees.

There was no public comment.

8. UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
[Discussion]

President Evans gave the following update:

I will try to be as brief as Vice President Covington. The Strategic Planning Committee met recently and spent quite a lot of time talking through facilities and began conversations regarding partnerships that the department has had. One thing I'll mention, just because it has come up a couple times this evening regarding outreach to the community, is an idea to create boards, the Police Department's Boards has, but it would be called Battalion Advisory Boards with the idea we would go and meet in the community on a more regular basis so we can share what's going on in the Department, what our needs are, and really be more active and use our neighbors as advocates for the department. We have two meetings coming up soon; one on November 30th, the other on December 3rd, with representatives from the Mayor's Office, the Budget Office, the

Controller, and Capital Planning. I have some concerns about that meeting, which I have shared in that I don't think our committee is quite ready to share with the outside world where we're at and what the priorities and needs of the Department are. So I do have some concerns that it's premature. I've asked the Mayor's Chief of Staff to push it back. He's not willing to do that so the meeting is going forward December 3rd. To be honest, I'm not sure that I'm going to participate in that meeting because I don't think it's the time. I have a concern that outside voices will try to shape our strategic plan rather than having the department shape it. I'm not expecting that they're going to fund everything that we need but I would rather see it come out of the department and then be told what is and isn't going to happen rather than in the middle of our process getting kind of sidetracked by what constraints they might want to put on our thinking and our planning. I'm still thinking that through but that's what's on the agenda. And then after that I think we'll kind of break off into subcommittees and really dive a little bit deeper into some more of the work.

There was no public comment.

9. DISCUSSION ON THE H50 ASSISTANT CHIEF'S EXAM [Discussion and possible action]

Taken out of order at 5:45

Dave Johnson, manager of the Public Safety Team from the Department of Human Resources introduced himself.

President Evans explained that she had asked that it be put on the agenda because some issues had been brought to her attention and she thought maybe the Commission was going to need to reach out to the Civil Service Commission regarding this exam but it's been resolved. She added that it brought to mind something the Strategic Planning Committee has been talking about, which is the training and promotional opportunities for people in the department and how we go about making sure there's transparency regarding the criteria. In this instance there was a situation where the testing criteria would have required the applicants to be permanent Battalion Chiefs off of probation. In the past however, members on probation have been able to sit for promotional exams and that impacted several individuals who have permanent employment but are still on probation. She continued that it is incumbent upon everyone to make sure that everyone knows what the process is, and that it's important to have a conversation about the promotional process and the H-50 in particular since those are the current and future leaders of the department.

Mr. Johnson gave the following explanation and update on the promotional process.

“in most of Civil Service exam processes, the completion of probation is a requisite for competing in the next rank or position or level in the class because it's at that point where you're assumed to work at the journey level. That implies that there is a lot of meaning to that probation, and that varies from department to department. So for this particular instance for the H-50 Assistant Chief, we looked at what we did for the last Assistant Chief process in 2010 where it required permanent employment and completion of probation. Hence, the announcement went out that way, went to the union that way, went to the Department that way, and that's the way we published it. Then we have appeals and protests, and we look back at the last two announcements for Battalion Chief to discover that they required only permanent employment. And then the condition that

people who had not completed probation would be placed under waiver until such time as they completed probation. In discussion with the department and Civil Service Commission executive officer, we relied on Civil Service Rule 310.4 which gives the director of human resources the authority to repost an announcement in the presence of appeals and protests. And we took advantage of that rule and reposted the announcement. And such reposting is not subject to protest or appeal. Hence, the reposting and reopening of the announcement which closed yesterday morning at 0800. So it was open for a 24-hour period reflecting permanent appointment but not having necessarily completed probation. Going forward, we're going to enter into a series of discussions with the Department and the employee groups regarding their operational needs and the best way to move ahead. We want to be consistent with the rules. We want to be consistent with the class specifications. And I think it's most important that we recognize the Department as operational concerns and align with that. So I would say no later than probably January, we'll begin those discussions and come up with a plan so that everyone in the department knows what's required to qualify to take a promotional exam.”

Commissioner Cleaveland asked Mr. Johnson what the probation period is. Mr. Johnson answered that for an entry level firefighter it is one year and every other promotional rank is six months.

Vice President Covington asked for clarification on the reposting. Mr. Johnson explained that Civil Service rule, 310.4 as it stands now, will always grant the director of Department of Human Resources the authority to repost in the presence of appeals and protests of the announcement or qualifications. He added that they are hoping that the discussion with the Department will eliminate any future appeals and protests because everyone will know going in what the requirements are. Vice President Covington asked Mr. Johnson to express to the director that she is appreciative of the reposting.

President Evans asked when the H-50 exam will be administered. Mr. Johnson replied it is tentatively scheduled for February, and they anticipate sending notices to the candidates tomorrow, but no later than Monday, wherein they will identify specific dates and issues of concern to the candidates.

President Evans suggested considering ways that benefit members to complete their probation when there is such a lag from when they apply to actually taking the exam. Mr. Johnson agreed, but stated that it would be difficult to do because promotions from the Fire Department's stand point are based on separations, and those are very difficult to predict. Mr. Johnson explained how the exam process worked. He stated that they are working with Fields Consulting as well as subject matter experts. The content of the exam is driven by job analysis and has a lot to do with the subject matter experts from within the Fire Department. He added that they cannot have an end product that does not reflect the policies and procedures of the Department. He added that the outside experts are very good at a broader perspective, but they need the inside perspective to make sure that the list will be able to reproduce and predict success in the Department. Chief Hayes-White explained how the subject matter experts are chosen.

There was no public comment.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

Communications to Commission received since last meeting of 11/5/15.

- Letter from Leonard Peoples dated 10/29/15

There was no public comment.

11. AGENDA FOR NEXT FIRE COMMISSION MEETING *[Discussion]*

Discussion regarding agenda for the December 3, 2015 regular meeting.

- Super Bowl 50 update
- Willman Resolution

There was no public comment.

12. ADJOURNMENT

President Evans adjourned the meeting at 7:09 PM.