

**FIRE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

**Wednesday, March 24, 2021 – 5:00 p.m.
This meeting was held remotely on WebEx**

The Video can be viewed by clicking this link:

https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=180&clip_id=38135

Vice President Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 5:11 p.m.

Commission President	Katherine Feinstein	Present
Commission Vice President	Tony Rodriguez	Present at 5:23
Commissioner	Stephen Nakajo	Present
Commissioner	Francee Covington	Present
Commissioner	Ken Cleaveland	Present
Chief of Department	Jeanine Nicholson	Present.

Bryan Rubenstein	Deputy Chief -- Operations
Jose Velo	Deputy Chief --Administration
Shayne Kaialoa	Division of Training
Sandy Tong	EMS
Mark Johnson	Airport Division
Dan DeCossio	Bureau of Fire Prevention
Dawn DeWitt	Support Services
Erica Arteseros	Homeland Security
Natasha Parks	Health and Wellness
Tom O'Connor	AWSS
Staff	
Mark Corso	Deputy Director of Finance
Olivia Scanlon	Communications and Outreach

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

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

Discussion and possible action to approve meeting minutes.

- Minutes from Regular Meeting on March 10, 2021.

Commissioner Cleaveland Moved to approve the minutes and Vice President Rodriguez Seconded. The motion was unanimous with members present.

There was no public comment.

4. CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT'S REPORT [Discussion]

REPORT FROM CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT, JEANINE NICHOLSON

Report on current issues, activities, and events within the Department since the Fire Commission meeting on March 10, 2021, including budget, academies, special events, communications, and outreach to other government agencies and the public.

Chief Nicholson reported on activities since the last meeting on February 10, 2021. She announced that the City entered the orange tier today which will allow more businesses to open and reminded everyone that masks were still to be worn and that the COVID command center at Moscone Center is shutting down and each department will run its own COVID command. She mentioned that the vaccination process is continuing to ramp up and that within the next five and a half weeks, there should be enough doses for every San Franciscan and the Department will be assisting with vaccinations on Treasure Island on Saturday. She mentioned that since the last commission meeting, she and some members of the command staff have met with Local 798 to align their budget priorities so they can move forward with one message to the Mayor's Budget Office and Board of Supervisors.

Commissioner Cleaveland thanked Chief Nicholson for her report and confirmed that the key points that Local 798 and the Department will present to the Budget Office are EMS, resources for the Street Crisis Response Team, and EMS-6, fleet and equipment replacement plan, and Diversity, equity, and inclusion plan. Commissioner Cleaveland stated that he would be happy to help lobby the Board of Supervisors and the mayor's office to support the needs of the Department.

Commissioner Covington confirmed that it was Chief Nicholson, Chief Rubenstein, Chief Velo, Olivia Scanlon who met with Shon Buford, and several other members of the Board of 798 to discuss the budget priorities. She also asked for the ethnic breakdown of the current academy class and Chief Nicholson stated that according to DHR guidelines, she could only share that the minority composition in the 127th class, is 16 out of 25, or 64 percent. She added that she could not give a gender or ethnicity breakdown because of the group size; that anything fewer than 10 people in a group, cannot be released. Commissioner Covington asked if that is a new edict because traditionally, they have received that information and that the former Chief of the Department always gave them that breakdown when requested. Commissioner Covington asked if there has been discussion about the Fire Department being able to access some of the federal funds that are coming in and Mr. Corso responded that currently there are several initiatives through which the city, in general, is going to be receiving some of those federal funds, either through direct payment or grant programs and it is being discussed internally within the mayor's office and will hopefully be a piece of the overall budget submittal to the Board in June. She also offered to help lobby City Hall if needed.

There was no public comment.

REPORT FROM ADMINISTRATION, DEPUTY CHIEF JOSE VELO

Report on the Administrative Divisions, Fleet and Facility status and updates, including update from Chief DeWitt on the progress of Station 25 and the Ambulance Training Facility Finance, Support Services, and Training within the Department.

Chief Velo presented his February 2021 report. He announced that they continue to do in-service training modules, such as forcible entry module, dive training, professional development training, and battalion chief leadership training. He added that they hosted classes funded by the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) which will allow for confined space and transportation rescue and that the Airport units continue to train for an upcoming mutual aid response drill and other drills required by FAA regulations. He stated that Firefighter Patrick Reyes through the SFFISE program provided 78 K through 2nd-grade presentations and 70 3rd through 5th-grade presentations about fire safety. He touched on NERT, where they continue to support vaccination sites; the Health, Safety, and Wellness Division; through Chief Parks,

where they continue to do health and safety community meetings and hosted two mental health Fire Aid workshops; the Physician's Office; where they have been working on changing their mentality from just workers' comp cases to working on health check and mental health projects and he commended Nurse Practitioner Stephanie Phelps in leading the charge in collecting nutritious recipes from members to put in a cookbook. He mentioned that Captain Zalba of the Investigative Services Bureau did 57 random alcohol and drug testing and all were negative and that Chief O'Connor, PUC liaison had several meetings coordinating with PUC on a report that is due on June 30th, 2021 regarding the possibility of a seawater pump station. He also touched on the Support Services where he touched on the fleet update and presented a chart with the status of the current fleet and added that they need to continue to push the mayor's office for funding to replace the outdated apparatus.

Commissioner Cleaveland thanked Chief Velo for his report and confirmed that half of the aerial trucks are beyond their useful age. Chief Velo added that they get a lot of wear and tear because of the hills in the city.

Commissioner Covington asked Chief O'Connor to give them more information on the seawater station study. Chief O'Connor stated that the study is approaching its finish and it's presenting a myriad of difficulties, both technologically and with permits necessary to construct something out in the ocean and what they're looking at doing is augmenting the system, having a saltwater pump station perhaps in the bay to ease both the technological issues as well as the permitting requirements they are facing. He added that with the westside of the City they are looking at pumping from Lake Merced, which would provide millions of gallons of water which would be equivalent to a saltwater pump station. Commissioner Covington stated that saltwater is also quite corrosive, and it would be hard on the equipment overall. She also confirmed that the Department has six jet skis at \$21,000 each.

Commissioner Nakajo gave Chief O'Connor a heads up of what he would be asking when he presents on the AWSS at the April 28th meeting, such as how the PUC was traditionally housed in a different unit before his position was created; and a follow-up on the seawater pump station when the study is complete.

Vice President Rodriguez thanked Chief Velo for his report and confirmed that the work being done on Pump Station 2 is continuing right now and they are nearing the end. He also asked where the money is coming from for projects happening on Vicente Streets, Clarendon Avenue, and Terry Francois Street. Chief O'Connor responded that there is an initial sale of bonds from the ESER 2020 last year because they realized they had an opportunity to put pipe in the ground right away before the final design was done for what is called West Side Phase One where they extended a looped pipe system out to the Richmond and Sunset Districts and the initial sale of the bond was to get pipe in the ground while the ground was open for other projects. Then there will be a second sale issue of bonds for more research and development for the West Side Phase One expansion and that is coming from ESER 2020 as well. He added that the subsequent reports that he was talking about earlier, both the neighborhood water demand, firefighting demand, the saltwater pump station demand, and there is a comprehensive emergency firefighter water supply report due in December that will shape what they are looking at probably to be ESER 2027, another ESER Bond going forward to further expand the emergency firefighting water supply. The bond monies generated from ESER 2010, ESER 2014, and now ESER 2020 is funding what is happening now. Vice President Rodriguez also confirmed that the shared spaces are to become permanent and that the Fire Department's role in those inspections is ongoing as the Department, through Chief DeCossio has put their

proposal with guidelines and standards that should apply. Vice President Rodriguez further confirmed that the San Francisco Fire Auxiliary Reserves are a group of volunteers that help the Fire Department and is a long-storied tradition in the fire Department and goes back to World War II and is comprised with folks that fluctuate over the years, they train weekly and respond at major fires or emergencies and help outside by deploying hose and picking up equipment.

Chief Dewitt of Staff Services presented the attached PowerPoint: <https://sf-fire.org/sites/default/files/COMMISSION/Fire%20Commission%20Support%20Documents%202015/49.pdf> and <https://sf-fire.org/sites/default/files/COMMISSION/Fire%20Commission%20Support%20Documents%202015/35.pdf>

She supplied construction updates for the Ambulance Deployment Facility (ADF) and Station 35. She started with the ADF by stating Station 49 Ambulance Deployment Facility arose out of the 2016 Health and Safety Bond and they are in the very final stages of this project. She added that they are currently doing their punch list walkthrough which is going through the facility regularly and working on the little things that need to be changed such as outlets, some electrical, some lights. She stated that the completion date is April 26th, 2021 and they will need about six weeks to move in from completion because it does take some time to move from one facility to the next. She covered some of the delays and challenges. She went through the slides and explained the layout and different views from different vantage points.

With Station 35, she stated that the project came out of the 2014 ESER bond and the completion date in the summer of 2021, although that date is uncertain as they are awaiting electrical and water hook-ups but are working closely with PG & E and PUC to expedite all work that needs to happen. She touched on the delays and challenges with the project and added that it will be the only floating firehouse in the world. She described each of the slides in detail. She announced that President Feinstein gave a surprise visit and thinks it is a beautiful and stunning building.

Commissioner Covington stated that Station 49 is glorious and the staff that works there deserves this kind of facility and it reflects how the higher-ups feel about the staff at Station 49 and sends the impression that you are all doing a great job and here is this fabulous building to do that great job from. She congratulated everyone who worked on it. She also suggested that anyone interested should watch the video on Channel 25 which is a video on the background of the planning for Station 49. She confirmed that there are enough charging stations to charge 10 vehicles. She was also pleased to see solar panels on the building as well as the artwork in the gates.

Vice President Rodriguez echoed kudos to the finished project as being in construction his whole life, he has been to both projects when they were being built and he is impressed with the transformation.

Commissioner Nakajo thanked Chief DeWitt for her presentation and stated that is exactly what he was looking for because of COVID and shelter in place, they have not been able to have site visits and he misses the interaction with the Department and the members, and he thought the slides were magnificent and he cannot wait to have the opportunity to see them in person. He thanked Chief Velo for his comprehensive report.

Commissioner Cleaveland thanked Chief DeWitt for her incredibly wonderful report and stated he is excited to see Station 35 and Station 49 finally come to fruition. He confirmed that the old Station 35 will continue to house the engine and there have been no plans for turning it into a museum.

President Feinstein acknowledged the incredible portfolio of projects Chief DeWitt is responsible for. She stated that she was able to visit Station 35 and she would love to live there, as it was impressive and spectacular.

There was no public comment.

5. FIRE COMMISSION AMENDED ANNUAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE 2021

[Discussion and possible action]

Discussion and possible action on the amended Statement of Purpose 2021.

President Feinstein stated that a lot of effort went into the redraft and updating it from its form to make it more current and reflective of the scope of services and goals of the Department moving forward and she thanked everyone on the command staff that participated in the changes.

Commissioner Cleaveland thought it was a wonderful draft and has not deviated from the original Annual Statement of Purpose and suggested that it get read into the record.

Vice President Rodriguez also thought it was changed in a positive way and agreed it should be read into the record.

Commissioner Nakajo stated he thought the statement was acceptable and asked for some clarity on the section about workforce or diversity of the workforce.

Commissioner Covington thought the Statement of Purpose was a good update and suggested capitalizing the first words in the bulleted sections. She confirmed that Chief Nicholson, Chief Tong, Chief Velo, Chief Rubenstein, Captain Peoples, and herself were involved in the changes.

Commissioner Covington Moved to approve the Statement of Purpose 2021 and Commissioner Cleaveland Seconded. The motion was unanimous.

Commission Secretary read aloud the Statement into the record. Commissioner Nakajo commented that in item 6 there is a reference of communities and diversity and stated that came from the Consent Decree and they spent a lot of time in terms of equity among what they used the terminology of communities of color, and he wanted to make sure that that community issue expands itself into a definition of community at large that does enhance all of the diversity of the city that reflects within the Department.

There was no public comment.

6. COMMISSION REPORT *[Discussion]*

Report on Commission activities since last meeting on March 10, 2021.

Commissioner Covington stated that she had an opportunity to visit the permitting department and chat with Captain Harold and everyone else working there for the Fire Department and

acknowledged that the building was stunningly beautiful, and she thanked them all for welcoming her.

Commissioner Nakajo commented that the recent level of attacks of hate and violence on members of the Asian Pacific Islander community is distressing to all and they are unacceptable. He added that many members of the API community have reached out to him and wanted him to relay that recent example of wanting to do something positive in the recent rash of violence where off duty members of the Fire Department went and did senior escorting and safety patrols in Chinatown and according to the president of the Asian Firefighter's Association, Keith Onishi, many of those off duty members are current members of AFA and felt they needed to be empowered to be able to do something positive so they went out to volunteer yesterday in Chinatown and Commissioner Nakajo hopes that it becomes a call for action to other members of the Department who are of Asian American descent to be engaged and do some positive acts in the community.

President Feinstein agrees with Commissioner Nakajo's comments and added that to have Asian Pacific Islanders targeted in this ignorant vicious way is unacceptable and she is proud of these members who are volunteering to help.

There was nothing to report.

7. AGENDA FOR NEXT AND FUTURE FIRE COMMISSION MEETINGS *[Discussion]*

Discussion regarding agenda for next and future Fire Commission meetings.

There was no public comment.

- Update from Chief Park and Tony Boone
- Introduction of Dr. Lacocque

There was no public comment.

8. ADJOURNMENT

President Feinstein adjourned the meeting at 7:14 p.m.