

**FIRE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES**

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**Wednesday, June 23, 2021 – 5:00 p.m.  
This meeting was held remotely on WebEx**

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The Video can be viewed by clicking this link:

[https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=180&clip\\_id=38868](https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=180&clip_id=38868)

President Feinstein called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

Commission President	Katherine Feinstein	Present
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 and David Brown	Airport Division	
Ken Cofflin	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	

President Feinstein exercised her presidential prerogative and announced the sudden passing of Vice President Rodriguez and acknowledged the contribution that he made to the Fire Commission. She added that he brought perspective and work ethic and was determined to figure things out and will be greatly missed. She also acknowledged his lovely wife and four daughters that he leaves behind and she thanked Chief Arteseros for the coordination she provided regarding his services which will be held on Friday.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Member of the public spoke without providing a name and she expressed her concern regarding a retired fire captain who has called into a County Board of Supervisors meeting to disparage a man who was a victim of the County Sheriff's SWAT raid, and she questioned the ethics training that is provided to the SFFD.

President Feinstein welcomed Fire Marshal Ken Cofflin and Airport Assistant Deputy Chief David Brown to the meeting.

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

Discussion and possible action to approve meeting minutes.

- Minutes from Regular Meeting on June 9, 2021.

Commissioner Cleaveland Moved to approve the minutes and Commissioner Nakajo Seconded. The motion was unanimous.

- Minutes from the Special Meeting on June 16, 2021.

Commissioner Cleaveland Moved to approve the minutes and Commissioner Nakajo Seconded. The motion was unanimous.

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 May 12, 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 June 9, 2021. She thanked President Feinstein for her comments on Vice President Rodriguez and stated how heartbreaking his passing is. She sent her condolences from the entire department to his family.

She thanked the commissioners who attended the unveiling of Firefighter/Paramedic Jason Cortez's name on the line of duty death memorial wall at headquarters on June 15, 2021. She added that it was very meaningful for his wife Patty and his two boys. She announced that on June 18, 2021, they had the funeral of Firefighter Christopher Yock who died after fighting a fire at San Francisco International Airport and she was able to talk to his 13-year-old son and give him his father's helmet and badge. She also attended the Station 49 Ribbon cutting where she acknowledged Chief Tong who rocked the house with her words and thanked the commissioners, Mayor Breed, and Board President Shamman Walton for attending that function. She mentioned that they are in the process of hiring for the next H-2 class as well as an H-3 Level 1 class. She thanked Mark Corso and Olivia Scanlon for pushing hard on the budget and she touched on some of the highlights of the budget including working on getting additional medics and FTEs for Station 49. She thanked Chief Johnson and Fire Marshal DeCossio for stepping up and being part of her command staff and moving the department forward in such a positive way and was pleased to announce and welcome Ken Cofflin as the new fire marshal and Dave Brown as the new assistant deputy chief of the airport.

Ken Cofflin introduced himself and stated that it is a great honor, and he appreciates being able to serve as the fire marshal of San Francisco and realizes he has big shoes to fill. ADC Dave

Brown introduced himself and thanked Chief Johnson for his 30 years of dedicated service and he also has big shoes to fill, and he hopes he can step up and do half as good a job as Chief Johnson did, and he looks forward to working with the Commission.

President Feinstein confirmed that the next academy class will most likely have around 40 recruits. She also confirmed that the Chief believes the Department needs more medics and they are working on what that number might be.

Commissioner Nakajo chimed in on congratulating Chief Tong on the great job she did at the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony as well as Chief DeWitt, and the members of Station 49. He acknowledged the building which is the new Station 49 and DPW's relationship in working to get the building built. He acknowledged the presence of Mayor Breed and Chief Administrative Officer Carmen Chu at the ribbon-cutting ceremony, and he recalled the levels of history since EMS came over from DPH. He thanked Captain Jose Zalba for his support today as well as the wonderful tour he got from Paramedic Carla Beyen. He Welcomed Chief Brown and Fire Marshal Cofflin.

There was no public comment.

#### REPORT FROM ADMINISTRATION, DEPUTY CHIEF JOSE VELO

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

Chief Velo presented his May 2021 report. He mentioned that the 127<sup>th</sup> Academy Graduation will be on Friday at 9:30 a.m. and he shared pictures of the recruits' final days of training. He acknowledged the great work of Training Chief Kaialoha. He added that the Fire Reserves are back getting hands-on training and they have started a new academy a month and a half ago so the program will be growing again. He touched on other training such as rescue swimmer and Coastal Incident Command System for coastal and surf rescue events and a technical rescue class where they use cranes and Paratech shoring.

He stated that Chief Parks, the Health, Safety, and Wellness Chief was busy, and that May was Mental Health Awareness Month and they focused on mental health training drills and sent out information for the members. He added that Chief Parks is working on an opportunity with the national firefighter cancer study, and they have 10 female firefighters participating and the purpose is to study the health effects of the firefighting profession and to monitor cancer issues. Chief Velo stated that three members who were not vaccinated contracted COVID through community spread. He added that Captain Zalba has been busy not only randomly testing members but is helping the doctor's office with end-of-probation and probation testing and helping Jesusa Bushong of the Human Resource Department with onboarding of the new Level 1 academy. He mentioned that Support Services under the leadership of Chief Dewitt is always busy and gave an update on Staton 35, with a move-in date around October 2021 and he thanked all the commissioners for attending the ribbon cutting at Station 49 and for the powerful and meaningful comments from Chief Tong. He added that he's proud to be able to deliver such a state-of-the-art station to the members of 49 so they can have a decent working

station to come out and do the job they do every day. He stated that the contracts for the hose tenders have been closed so they can engage in the construction of the new ones, and he added that they received a federal grant for Type 6 apparatus. He stated that Chief O'Connor has been busy and that pump station 2 will be doing drills in July when all the work has been completed. He announced that they participated in the Juneteenth parade and events as well as the somber but important anniversary of the Berkeley Way fire. He concluded his report in the memory of Christopher Yock and thanked Commissioner Nakajo and Commissioner Cleaveland for attending the services as well as in the memory of Commissioner Rodriguez.

Commissioner Cleaveland thanked Chief Velo for his excellent report and he also expressed his regret at the loss of Commissioner Rodriguez.

Commissioner Nakajo thanked Chief Velo for his comprehensive report and commented that he is impressed when he recognizes all the members within the report representing different divisions. He announced some of the members within the report such as Dr. Brokaw, Captain Zalba, Chief O'Connor, Chief Parks, Chief DeWitt, Chief Kaialoa, Maryann Poon, and Phil Buckley of the Reserves and it makes him reflect and appreciate the total membership in all the areas of the department. He thanked all the members of the Department and everyone in the units as well. He added that as he walked through the tour of the new Station 49 with Carla Beyen, and after 25 years on the commission it finally made sense to see the conceptual image off paper. He also acknowledged the good qualities of Tony Rodriguez and offered his condolences to his family.

Commissioner Covington thanked the two outgoing chiefs, Chief Johnson and Chief DeCossio for all they have done and that they have kept the Department an excellent department and she welcomed their replacements. She mentioned that she thought the ribbon cutting was a stellar event and found it uplifting with everything going on. She touched on her friendship with Commissioner Rodriguez and will miss him tremendously and sent condolences to his family.

President Feinstein confirmed that Station 35 is five months late and the work is going well, and they are in good progress. She also acknowledged the great work by Chief DeWitt and Chief Velo on Station 49, and she thought was a wonderful bright spot in a gloomy month for the Fire Department. Chief DeWitt gave special recognition to Rescue Captain Craig Gordon for his organizational skills and keeping track of and made sure the transition from the old Station 49 facility to the new facility was seamless.

There was no public comment.

**5. COMMISSION REPORT *[Discussion]***

Report on Commission activities since last meeting of May 12, 2021.

President Feinstein attended and spoke at the unveiling of a name on the memorial wall at Headquarters for Firefighter/Paramedic Cortez and found it tough to speak looking at his two little boys. She added that the unveiling ceremony was beautifully done, and she was honored to be there on behalf of the Commission, and she hopes no more names will have to go on that wall.

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.

- Election of Vice President of the Commission

There was no public comment.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

President Feinstein adjourned the meeting in the memory and honor of Firefighter Yock and Commissioner Tony Rodriguez at 6:15 p.m.