

**FIRE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES**

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**Wednesday, February 9, 2022 – 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 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=40510](https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=180&clip_id=40510)

President Feinstein called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Commission President	Katherine Feinstein	Present
Vice President	Stephen Nakajo	Present
Commissioner	Francee Covington	Present
Commissioner	Ken Cleaveland	Present
Commissioner	Armie Morgan	Present
Chief of Department	Jeanine Nicholson	Present.
Robert Postel	Deputy Chief -- Operations	
Thomas O'Connor	Deputy Chief --Administration	
Sandy Tong	EMS	
David Brown	Airport Division	
Ken Cofflin	Bureau of Fire Prevention	
Shayne Kaialoa	Division of Training	
Ramon Serrano	Support Services	
Erica Arteseros	Homeland Security	
Natasha Parks	Health and Wellness	
Brice Peoples	Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	
Staff		
Mark Corso	Deputy Director of Finance	
Elaine Walters	CFO	

President Feinstein read the Ramaytush Ohlone Land Acknowledgement.

**2. RESOLUTION 2022-03 [Discussion and possible action]**

Resolution making findings to allow teleconferenced meetings under California Government Code Section 54953(e)

Commissioner Covington Moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Cleaveland Seconded. The motion was unanimous.

There was no public comment.

**3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

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

Discussion and possible action to approve meeting minutes.

- Minutes from Regular Meeting on January 26, 2022.

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

There was no public comment.

**5. 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 January 26, 2022, including budget, academies, special events, communications, and outreach to other government agencies and the public.

Chief Nicholson congratulated Commissioner Covington on her reappoint to the Fire Commission. She stated that she and her command staff attended several events in Chinatown over the past couple of weeks and stated it was nice to appear in person to support small businesses. She mentioned that Omicron is still on a downward trend and added that the Department has 31 members out ill as of yesterday with COVID. She also attended the Women's Chief Council Meeting. She touched on the budget, announcing that Mr. Corso would be doing a budget presentation; that they welcomed another EMS Advancement Academy, and that they are continuing to hire and staff up the EMS and Community Paramedic Division.

Commissioner Covington thanked the Chief for her report and thanked her and the members of the command staff that joined the virtual swearing-in for her last week. She confirmed that as of today, the department had 29 people off work with COVID. Commissioner Covington suggested that the members who are out sick indefinitely with COVID, she thinks offering them moral support might be beneficial.

Commissioner Cleaveland suggested that the Department put out a survey for members to see if anyone is interested in representing the Fire Department on the Guardians of the City board.

There was no public comment.

**REPORT FROM OPERATIONS, DEPUTY CHIEF ROBERT POSTEL**

Report on overall field operations, including greater alarm fires, Emergency Medical Services, Bureau of Fire Prevention & Investigation, Homeland Security, Airport Division.

Chief Postel also congratulated Commissioner Covington on her reappointment to the greatest commission in this city. He mentioned that there were 14 working fires during January, and all were contained to just single alarm fires. He added that they responded to a total of 14,003 incidents during January, 45 percent of those were a combined Suppression EMS response, 26 percent were Suppression only and 27 percent were an EMS only response as well as 10 water rescues and five cliff rescues during January. He touched on PIO outreach, EMS, Community paramedicine, Street Crisis Response Team, Street Wellness Response Team, Bureau of Fire Prevention and Investigation, and the Division of Training, which is now working under CD-2 instead of CD-3.

Commissioner Cleaveland thanked Chief Postel for his comprehensive, organized, and detailed report. He thought it was a good idea to have Firefighter Nick Oxford detailed as a policy and data analyst for the Community Paramedicine Division. He acknowledged the development of the policy and training dealing with involuntary mental health holds. Chief Tong added they are currently developing policy and training guidelines for the 51/50 program that will be offered to the community paramedic rescue captains. Commissioner Cleaveland stated how shocking it is for him to read that a few certain individuals on the street have called 9-1-1 200 plus times in the last few years and those few have cost the city such an enormous amount of money. He touched on the

Project FRIEND program where Narcan is provided to EMS staff so they can distribute them to clients that may encounter a potential overdose patient.

Commissioner Covington asked if there was a way for the commissioners to be trained in the use of Narcan. Chief Tong stated she would look into that.

Vice President Nakajo thanked Chief Postel for his comprehensive report. He confirmed that going forward, Homeland Security and PIO will fall under CD3's jurisdiction and the Training Division will fall under CD2's jurisdiction. He also confirmed that EMS-6' Street Crisis Response Team, Street Overdose Response Team, and the Street Wellness Response Team have all been implemented as of January 24, 2022. He acknowledged Chief Michael Mason, Captains Kucharski, and Tianero who have been assigned to the Tenderloin Emergency Initiative. He confirmed that the Linkage Center is a drop-in center where folks can get connected to various referrals and services. He expressed his interest in the 51/50 program and the policy and data analyst for community paramedicine. He also commented on the minority population that drives the numbers and costs through Department personnel and he acknowledged the homeless population, the mental health and drug addiction that often seems to be lumped in one categorical, but it all falls within the responsibility in terms of the Department because they are the ones that are public servants that respond to these calls, and he sees it as a tragedy. He touched on the administrative hearing process through Fire Marshal Cofflin. Regarding the Airport Division, he stated that he appreciates the pictures of the bike medics at the airport, and he confirmed with Chief Brown that the Airport is budgeted for five bike medics but because of reduced ridership, they anticipate adding one more to their current staff of three.

President Feinstein acknowledged that there were five cliff rescues during January and three of them were at Fort Funston and she wanted to know whether the Department is doing anything to work with the entity that oversees the area to ensure better safety. Chief Postel responded that more than half of those rescues are for dogs and fencing is not going to keep a dog from wandering down a trail to a point where they can't get out and he confirmed that the Department does not charge for these rescues. President Feinstein confirmed with Chief Tong that all community paramedic programs were negatively impacted by illness, exposure, and quarantine of members due to COVID 19. President Feinstein thinks it makes perfect sense to have paramedics be able to administer a 51/50 hold. President Feinstein also recommended looking into conservatorships as a lot of Department resources are going to these people that cycle through the system. She confirmed that fully staffed, 100 people work under Fire Marshal Cofflin.

There was no public comment.

## **6. DRAFT OPERATING BUDGET – FISCAL YEARS 2022-2023/ 2023-2024**

### ***[Discussion and possible action]***

Discussion and possible action to adopt the Fire Department's Operating Budget for Fiscal Years 2022-2023/2023-2024.

Mr. Corso presented a review, discussion, and possible approval of the fiscal year 22/23 budgets and stated it is still very much a work in progress. He added that there are quite a few items that they'll be working on leading up to the mayor's budget on June 1, 2022. He presented the following PowerPoint: <https://sf-fire.org/files/2022-02/Commission%20Presentation%20-%202022%2002%2009%20Budget%20Review.pdf>

He mentioned that they are back on a pre-COVID budget timeline and budgets are due by all city departments to the Mayor's Office on February 22, 2022, where the

Departments and Mayor's office consolidate all proposals, work, and negotiate on any initiatives and that is all due to the Board of Supervisors on June 1, 2022.

Mr. Corso stated that there was a large supplement for EMS personnel for an additional 50 FTEs. He added that being able to backfill existing positions is a priority for the Department as well as aligning requests with Mayoral priorities and supporting frontline Fire, EMS, community Paramedicine, in addition, they want to support uniformed and civilian employees, both on and off duty in all facets of the job, be it mental health or physical health initiatives. He touched on the next steps, including staffing models, equipment questions, hiring and revenue projections, and monitoring COVID impacts as they move forward.

Commissioner Cleaveland thanked Director Corso for his excellent report and stated it was very illustrative of the Department's expenses and income and finds it helpful. He asked a variety of questions and Mr. Corso responded accordingly.

Vice President Nakajo thanked Director Corso and stated how continually narrating the working relationship with the mayor's office is, which he thinks is key and deserves acknowledgment and recognition for the support that the mayor's office has given the Department.

President Feinstein asked if when someone calls for an ambulance, who pays for it. Mr. Corso responded that if the person has insurance, the insurance company gets billed. He went on to explain how the fee structure is established, whether by private insurance, Medicare, Medical, or non-insurance.

Vice President Nakajo Moved to adopt the budget as presented. Commissioner Cleaveland seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

There was no public comment.

## **7. AGENDA FOR NEXT AND FUTURE FIRE COMMISSION MEETINGS**

### ***[Discussion]***

Discussion regarding agenda for next and future Fire Commission meetings.

- Overview from FF Nick Oxford/data and policy analyst for Paramedicine Division
- GOTC Update
- Grants applied for/received
- Homeland Security Update

There was no public comment.

## **8. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 9**

Public comment on all matters pertaining to Items 9(b), (c), and (d) below, including public comment on whether to hold Items 9(b), (c) and (d) in closed session.

There was no public comment.

## **9. POSSIBLE CLOSED SESSION REGARDING PERSONNEL MATTERS AND EXISTING LITIGATION**

### **a. VOTE ON WHETHER TO CONDUCT ITEMS 9(b), (c), and (d) IN CLOSED SESSION *[Action]***

The Commission may hear Items 9(b) and (c) in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b) and Administrative Code Section 67.10(b) and may here Item

9(d) in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(a) and Administrative Code Section 67.10(d).

*Commissioner Covington Moved to conduct 9(b)(c) and (d) in closed session. Commissioner Cleveland seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.*

*The closed session started at 11:16 (took a break until 11:25)*

**b. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE DISMISSAL, CASE NO. 2021-21 [Discussion and possible action]**

The Commission will consider a pre-hearing matter in an employee dismissal case.

*Also, in closed session for this item was: Deputy City Attorney Brad Russi  
Commission Secretary, Maureen Conefrey*

*Vice President Nakajo Moved to defer the decision on the motion to dismiss until after the evidentiary hearing. Commissioner Covington Seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.*

**c. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE, CASE NO. 2021-03: COMMISSION DELIBERATIONS ON PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT, AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF FINDINGS OF FACT REGARDING COMMISSION'S DECISION ON EMPLOYEE SUSPENSION APPEAL [Action]**

At a meeting on January 12, 2022, regarding the above-referenced matter, the Commission deliberated and reached a decision on employee discipline. The Commission is now considering proposed Findings of Fact in relation to that decision.

*Also, in closed session for this item was: Deputy City Attorney Brad Russi  
Commission Secretary, Maureen Conefrey*

*Vice President Nakajo Moved to approve the Findings of Fact as Submitted. President Feinstein Seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.*

**d. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – EXISTING LITIGATION.**

Conference with legal counsel to discuss existing litigation pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(a), (c), (d), and Administrative Code Section 67.10(d)(1) and possible recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for settlement approval or to take other action. **[Action item]**

Existing Litigation:

*Lawrence Thomas v. City and County of San Francisco, et al.  
San Francisco Superior Court Case No. CGC-20-585622*

*Also, in closed session for this item was: Deputy City Attorney Brad Russi  
Commission Secretary, Maureen Conefrey and Deputy City Attorney, Kate Kimberlin*

*Vice President Nakajo Moved to recommend the settlement to the Board of Supervisors. Commissioner Cleveland seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.*

**10. REPORT ON ANY ACTION TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION** *[Discussion and possible action]* as specified in California Government Code Section 54957.1(a) and San Francisco Administrative Code section 67.12(b).

*There was nothing to report.*

**11. VOTE TO ELECT WHETHER TO DISCLOSE ANY OR ALL DISCUSSIONS HELD IN CLOSED SESSION**, as specified in San Francisco Administrative Code Section 67.12(a). *[Action]*

*Commissioner Covington Moved to not disclose. Commissioner Morgan seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.*

**12. ADJOURNMENT** President Feinstein adjourned the meeting at 11:46 a.m.