

SAN FRANCISCO FIRE COMMISSION
**FIRE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**
Thursday, SEPTEMBER 10 2015 – 4:00 p.m.
698 Second Street, Room 102

The audio files have been uploaded onto the Fire Commission Website at:
http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=133&clip_id=23632

President Andrea Evans called the meeting to order at 4:11 PM

1. ROLL CALL

Commission President	Andrea Evans	Present (left at 5:35)
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
Mark Gonzales	Deputy Chief – Operations	
Jeff Myers	EMS	
Ken Lombardi	Support Services	
Raemona Williams	Division of Training	
Assistant Chiefs		
Kevin Burke	Division 2	
Denise Newman	Division 3	
Staff		
Clement Yeh	EMS Medical Director	
Mark Corso	CFO	

2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Kloster spoke regarding his employment with the SFFD and how he has been discriminated against, and wanted to know why he is not working and why the Commission and Administration have done nothing to help him get his job back.

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

Discussion and possible action to approve meeting minutes.

- a. Minutes from the Regular Meeting of August 13, 2015
- b. Minutes from the Special Meeting of August 27, 2015

Commissioner Hardeman moved to approve the Minutes. Commissioner Nakajo seconded. Motion to Adopt Minutes was unanimous.

There was no public comment.

4. PRESENTATION ON HISTORY OF MERITORIOUS AWARDS

Presentation on the history of Departmental Meritorious Awards by Mr. Michael McDowell.

Chief Hayes-White introduced Mr. McDowell and stated that he is a true historian of the Department and he has done a lot to reserve the rich history and tradition of the Department.

Mr. McDowell's presentation is attached:

<https://sf-fire.org/files/2022-08/McDowells%20Meritorious%20awards%20presentation.pdf>

He concluded by stating that the presentation is dedicated to those members who gave their lives so that others may live.

Commissioner Nakajo thanked Mr. McDowell for this presentation and his historical reference and thought the Department is very fortunate to have him as a Department historian. Mr. McDowell gave a brief description on his professional background. He also stated that he works with the Guardians of the City and he finds researching the history of the SFFD very satisfying and enjoyable.

Commissioner Cleaveland thanked Mr. McDowell for his presentation. He asked when the last time medals were awarded. Mr. McDowell stated that Chief Hayes-White has been instrumental in bringing the medals back to the Department. Prior to her appointment, a medal had not been presented since the 1989 earthquake. Chief Hayes-White acknowledged that they try to have the award ceremonies every other year. Commissioner Cleaveland asked who selects the recipients. Chief Hayes-White explained that there is a Meritorious Committee, which currently consists of five members, including Chief Kevin Burke. Commissioner Cleaveland thanked Mr. McDowell for keeping and maintaining the history of the awards and for Chief Hayes-White for bringing it back on a regular basis, and he thinks when firefighters do heroic things, they need to be recognized for those actions. Commissioner Cleaveland stated he would like to see a bit of the history of the medal endowments, including the PowerPoint on the Website, opening it up to the general public so that they can realize we have real heroes within the San Francisco Fire Department. Chief Hayes-White confirmed there was something on the website but that it might be worth revisiting and possibly updating.

Commissioner Hardeman thanked Mr. McDowell for his presentation and commented that the firefighters are ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

Vice President Covington thanked Mr. McDowell for his presentation and complimented him on the antique book he brought with him. She noted that it goes back to the late 1800's and includes lots of Fire Commission meeting notes. She also thanked him for all of his research, tenacity and his passion doing this work.

President Evans also thanked Mr. McDowell for his presentation. She too was fascinated by it. She asked if there was an update to the book. Mr. McDowell explained that there are two volumes and until the 1940's, they actually did a description of each act and starting in

the 1950's they would just enter a name. He added that he's been working with the Department to actually retroactively enter names with the actual description of the act of merit. President Evans stated she thought that would be great as we look forward to the 150th anniversary to have and remember all the work and amazing acts that have been recorded. She also stated her desire to have the meritorious award ceremony done before the end of the year.

5. RESOLUTION 2015-08 [Discussion and possible action]

Discussion and possible action to approve Resolution 2015-08, recommending that the Board of Supervisors authorize the San Francisco Fire Department to accept and expend a 2014 FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant in the amount of \$780,664 to purchase five new ambulances.

Resolution 2015-08 is attached: <http://sf-fire.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=4125>

Mark Corso gave a brief overview of Resolution 2015-08.

Commission Vice President Covington moved to approve the Resolution. Commissioner Cleveland seconded. Motion to approve Resolution 2015-08 was unanimous.

Commission Secretary Maureen Conefrey read the resolution into the record.

There was no public comment.

6. FURTHER DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING AVAILABLE OPTIONS FOR TELEVISIONING FIRE COMMISSION MEETINGS AT CITY HALL [Discussion and possible action]

Available dates and times:

- **Room 400:**
 - 1st and 2nd Fridays 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM.
 - 3rd Fridays 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM
 - 4th Fridays 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM
- **Room 416:**
 - 1st Fridays 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM
 - 3rd Fridays 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM
 - 1st and 3rd Mondays – 8:00 AM – 1:15 PM.

SF GOV TV provided a matrix with the current schedule of equipped rooms at City Hall. Most time slots are already taken by other City Commissions and Boards. President Evans explained the options that City Hall has available for televising the commission meetings. She stated that right now, the windows that are available, are Monday mornings, which are not convenient to members of the public to get to if they are working and Friday afternoons, which are also not the most convenient.

Commissioner Cleveland thought the matrix was complicated and thought some of the spots were taken by commissions, committees or boards that may not actually be televised. He thought maybe we could check to see if any of them were willing to move to a different room in City Hall and perhaps free up a room that has AV capability for the Fire Commission. He added that the Fire Commission meetings need to be televised to have the public aware and able to participate and understand what is going on with the Fire Department.

Commissioner Nakajo suggested revisiting this issue after he and the other Commissioners had time to decipher the matrix more.

President Evans continued the matter to the second meeting in September.

There was no public comment.

7. 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 budget.

Chief Hayes-White report covered the period following the meeting on August 13, 2015.

She stated that the 2014-2015 budget is closing out successfully, and she thanked Mark Corso for his work in doing that. She added that Mr. Corso, with the help of Jesusa Bushong has created a matrix for all the positions that have been received in this year's budget. They are in the process of identifying and prioritizing the hiring process.

She touched on the 118th academy class that got underway with 40 recruits on August 24 and graduation is expected for December 18, 2015. They were joined yesterday by 17 members from Station 49. She acknowledged Assistant Deputy Chief Raemona Williams and her training staff for working with so many recruits.

Chief Hayes-White announced that they are awaiting the eligible list for the H-33 Rescue Captain. That exam was administered over the summer and approximately 82 members took the exam. She stated that they are making good progress on the roll out of the EMS-6 program.

Chief Hayes-White touched on the health bond for 2016, which the City has earmarked and agreed to about a 45 million dollar project.

Chief Hayes-White stated that although in 2009 they came up with an apparatus replacement, the City has not been able to fund it. She added that it is challenging to purchase fire apparatus. She also touched briefly on the plans and progress for the 150 Anniversary celebration and the continuing development of the strategic plan.

Chief Hayes-White suggested closing the meeting tonight in honor and memory of those who gave their lives on 9/11/01 and invited the Commissioners to join her and the Mayor at Station 7 to commemorate and acknowledge those who gave their lives on that day in 2001.

Chief Hayes-White touched briefly on their commitment to Vision Zero, but stated that they are also very cognizant of the fact that it is becoming more difficult for the apparatus to get from point A to point B. Because seconds count in an emergency, she added that they need to be realistic in their approach, as it relates to how streets are redesigned and developed.

Chief Hayes-White mentioned that she was meeting with DEM as well as Rec and Park at the Government Audits and Oversight Committee to discuss the dangers of brush fires and grass fires in areas of the City, including Golden Gate Park, McLaren Park, Mount Sutro, etc.

Chief Hayes-White explained that she and her assistant, Kelly Alves would be creating a quarterly bulletin with publishing software they were able to purchase. She mentioned that

she would welcome any suggestions, ideas, or recommendations and she thought it was another avenue to enhance the ability to communicate with members of the Department.

Commissioner Cleaveland thanked Chief Hayes-White for her comprehensive and impressive report. He asked if there has been an agreement reached with Local 798 concerning the H-8 per diem program. Chief Gonzales answered that they have reached a verbal agreement and that their lawyer was still looking at the final version.

Commissioner Cleaveland stated he was shocked to find out that the firehouses around the City do not have wifi and suggested the need to upgrade the communication system. He went on to ask about the vacant position in Planning. Chief Hayes-White said she has someone in mind and hopefully that position will be filled by next month. He concluded by complimenting the Chief and her assistant Kelly for working on the bulletin. He thinks it's critical that members of the Fire Department get a regular report on what the administration is doing.

Commissioner Nakajo thanked the Chief for her report and asked for clarification on the Ambulance Working Group. Chief Hayes-White explained that there were issues that were tackled last year as a work group, including getting the response times to be improved for the ambulance transport times and they made good headway with the increase in staffing. They also made progress with how they are tracking and reporting the data in conjunction with the private providers as well as DEM. She gave an example of the drop-in shelter at 1001 Polk Street, where they had about 80 calls a month, and most of the time, the 9-1-1-service was not needed, it was another service that was needed, so DPH was requested to post a higher level medical person there and the calls have dropped in half. This was all accomplished through the Working Group Committee meetings.

President Evans announced that she needed to leave early. She noted that it sounds as though there is a draft fleet replacement plan that Chief Lombardi and Mark Corso have been working on and that she would love to take a look at it and be involved in finalizing it. She added that former Commissioner Paul Conroy and she worked on one previously and she would be interested to see how it is modified.

President Evans asked if there was a schedule of the Urban Shield exercises that are to take place over the weekend. Chief Hayes-White answered that there was a schedule of upcoming events and she would provide the detailed bulletin to her. (President Evans excused herself from the meeting at approximately 5:35 pm)

Commissioner Hardeman stated that he supported the relaxed dress code for members during the heat wave.

There was no public comment.

REPORT FROM OPERATIONS

Report on overall field operations, the Bureau of Fire Prevention & Investigation, Airport Division.

Chief Gonzales reported for the month of August.

There were three second alarms. The first one was located at 3639 Taraval Street, involving the Riptide Bar, which was gutted. Assistant Chief Franklin was the incident commander. The second one was located at a residential homecare facility at 628 Shotwell. Assistant Chief Franklin was also the incident commander at this fire. The cause of the fire is listed as unintentional. The third second alarm was at 1053 Clayton Street. Assistant Chief Burke was the incident commander. This involved a three-story residential building. He added that all the firefighters are very aggressive and they do an excellent job.

Chief Gonzales touched on the EMS Division. He acknowledged Jesus Mora and Rob Neuneker for all their hard work putting together the schedules on the computer and the assignment office tasks. He added that the ambulance inspections were scheduled for August 24th through August 26th and LESMA did those inspections and all of the units passed.

With regards to the H-8's, he is expecting to have 21 at the end of the month ready to start per diems. He acknowledged Chief Lombardi for getting their uniforms and Assistant Deputy Chief Myers for helping with the process.

Chief Gonzales acknowledged Assistant Deputy Chief Dan DeCossio of BFI for doing a great job trying to address the backlog of incomplete investigation reports.

Commissioner Hardeman congratulated Chief Gonzales for the good work he has done in the last couple of months.

Vice President Covington asked Chief Gonzales if anyone was evacuated from the second alarm on Clayton Street. Chief Burke confirmed that no one was evacuated.

Vice President Covington asked Chief Carnes if NERT is at the Airport. Chief Carnes answered they do not have NERT at the Airport. Vice President Covington suggested that it might be worth to look into people who work at the airport and would like to be NERT trained so there is a complement to the trained firefighters and EMT's that are out there. Chief Hayes-White stated she would be happy to talk to Director John Martin who oversees the Airport Personnel to see if he would be interested in NERT training.

Vice President Covington voiced her concern that people outside of the Department do not seem to understand that while there may be apparatus that are smaller, it does not mean they are a good fit for San Francisco. She added that the apparatus needs to get up hills and other challenges in the City and they need a certain size apparatus. She asked how the public can be actively educated on this issue. Chief Hayes-White stated that Chief Lombardi and his staff have put together a good presentation related to not just the size of the apparatus, but the horsepower and emission standards.

Commissioner Nakajo asked for clarification on the H-8's. Chief Gonzales explained that they finished their first component of training which included 27 hours of video modules. They had a week of didactic in class and they are currently doing their preceptor training and should be done at the end of September, early October when they hit the streets. Further discussion ensued pertaining this issue between the H-8's and the private ambulance companies.

Commissioner Nakajo inquired as to how many recruits they anticipate for the January 2016 academy. Chief Hayes-White answered 54. She added that because of the SAFER grant, which is a federally funded grant that will pay for 36 firefighters for two years; she will be modifying the schedule, to add this class, which means she might have to push the August class back a bit. The ultimate goal of hiring is to reduce the mandatory overtime. With the addition to having more staffing, it should help the current members. There was brief discussion on attrition and retirement in terms of the number of sworn members and Proposition F.

There was no public comment.

8. COMMUNICATIONS

Communications to Commission received between 8/8/15 and 9/3/15.

- Email from Dian Traisci-Marandola dated September 3, 2015

There was no public comment.

9. AGENDA FOR NEXT FIRE COMMISSION MEETING [Discussion]

Discussion regarding agenda for the September 24, 2015 regular meeting.

- Presentation on developments at Bayview Hunters Point
- Progress on Reform disciplinary appeal process
- SFGOV TV

There was no public comment.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Covington adjourned the meeting at 6:15 in honor of the 343 Fire Department New York firefighters who gave their lives while attempting to save others on September 11th.