

**FIRE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES**

---

**January 11, 2023, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 416, San Francisco California, 94102

---

The meeting video can be reviewed by clicking the below link:

[https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=180&clip\\_id=42748](https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=180&clip_id=42748)

President Feinstein called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

**1. ROLL CALL**

Commission President	Katherine Feinstein	Present
Vice President	Stephen Nakajo	Present
Commissioner	Armie Morgan	Present
Commissioner	Marcy Fraser	Present
Commissioner	Paula Collins	Present
Chief of Department	Jeanine Nicholson	Present.
Robert Postel	Deputy Chief – Operations	
Sandy Tong	Deputy Chief – EMS and Community Paramedicine	
Ken Cofflin	Bureau of Fire Prevention	
Shayne Kaialoa	Division of Training	
Niels Tangherlini	EMS	
Shon Bufford	Equity, Diversity & Inclusion	
Erica Arteseros Brown	Homeland Security	
James Kotter	PUC Liaison	
Darius Luttrupp	ESER Project Manager	
Matt Alba	Health, Safety & Wellness	
Simon Pang	Community Paramedicine	
Patrick D’Arcy	Airport Division	
Matt Connor	Communications	
Assistant Chiefs		
Bill Storti	Division II	
Patrick Rabbit	Division III	
Staff		
Mark Corso	Deputy Director of Finance	

**2. RAMAYTUSH OHLONE LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

President Feinstein read the Ramaytush Ohlone Land Acknowledgement.

**3. RESOLUTION 2023-01 [Discussion and possible action]**

Adoption of resolution setting forth findings to allow teleconferenced meetings under California Government Code Section 54953(e).

Vice President Nakajo Moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Morgan Seconded. The motion was unanimous.

There was no public comment.

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Stacey Randecker spoke about her experience riding a bicycle in San Francisco when she came across an ambulance parked in the bike lane and how she was incensed at their obvious lack of concern. She continued that she has had enough of the SFFD vetoing proper Slow Street barriers, traffic diverters, speed bumps, protected bike lanes, and other traffic calming measures.

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

Discussion and possible action to approve meeting minutes.

- Minutes from Regular Meeting on December 14, 2022.

Commissioner Morgan Moved to approve the minutes and Commissioner Fraser Seconded. Commissioner Collins abstained. 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 December 14, 2022, including budget, academies, special events, communications, and outreach to other government agencies and the public.

Chief Nicholson highlighted some of the important issues since the last meeting. She thanked Deputy City Attorney Zach Porianda who has left the City Attorney's office. She touched on the budget and how challenging the outlook is. She mentioned that she attended the swearing-in of Tax Assessor, Joaquin Torres. Chief Nicholson described the Fire Department's response to the recent storms as well as the challenges and stated how proud she is of the Department and has so much gratitude for how they stepped up. She introduced Assistant Deputy Chief Darius Luttrupp who is overseeing the Earthquake Safety and Emergency Response projects and stated he's a wonderful addition to the command staff and has hit the ground running.

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, Training within the Department., and Airport Division.

Chief Postel reported on Operations during November and December. He stated that in 2022 they had 199 working fires and 22 of those turned into greater alarms, which means

that the resources that came on the first alarm weren't sufficient to contain the fire, they had to bring more resources to the scene to deal with it. He stated that in November they had 14 working fires and one greater alarm at 1846 43rd Avenue. He described the fire in detail. In December Chief Postel mentioned that there were 20 working fires and four were greater alarms at 683 Bluxome, 400 Franconia, 491 Bayshore Boulevard, and 1150 Castro Street, where he described the attack on these fires in detail. He also described in detail the response of the SFFD over the past 10 days of major storms. He touched on the Bureau of Fire Prevention, the Airport Division, and the Division of Training. His report is attached: <https://sf-fire.org/media/2693/download?inline>

Commissioner Morgan thanked Chief Postel for his report and all the battalions and companies doing great work.

Commissioner Fraser thanked Chief Postel for his impressive report and confirmed response times have increased since 2018. Chief Postel added that they did a preliminary study with the MTA and a firm called Fehr & Peers analyzing the different Streetscape changes that have been made and trying to find a relationship between the particular Streetscape changes and the increase in response times but analyzing response routes and they found some relationships, except for speed bumps, they didn't find anything that they could put their finger on so they are partnered with MTA to go into phase two of the study to try and draw some conclusions as to what may be impacting the increase in response times and find solutions.

Commissioner Fraser expressed her gratitude to the members for their response during the weather crisis.

Commissioner Collins thanked Chief Postel for his report and joined her colleagues in congratulating them and how proud they are to be a part of the department. She acknowledged the notion of gauging the impacts based on dollars saved, based on value saved, in addition to emergencies handled well.

Vice President Nakajo thanked Chief Postel for his report as well as all the units that responded to the recent storms and he thinks the good response and planning and firefighter analysis denotes a command level in the field who are doing the actualities and how capable and willing the members are during challenging times. Vice President Nakajo confirmed that recruitment is going well as there is a big pool of people that want to come here and work.

President Feinstein stated how much she appreciates the training notes they have been provided. She confirmed that Sutro Tower does not maintain any of the Department's communication equipment or antennas.

There was no public comment.

**REPORT FROM EMS AND COMMUNITY PARAMEDICINE, DEPUTY CHIEF SANDRA TONG**

Report on the EMS and Community Paramedicine Divisions

Chief Tong provided her November and December reports. She mentioned that they continue to have 350 EMS calls per day. She stated that one of the things that have impacted the way that their calls are distributed in December because the San Francisco EMS Agency instituted a pilot program to include BLS ambulances in the system where usually it's ALS capable ambulances that are responding to all 9-1-1 calls and they are doing this pilot project to increase a BLS level of ambulances in the system. She added that they have noticed one of the impacts is that with these increased numbers of BLS ambulances and if the call becomes a higher acuity response it requires a paramedic to respond as well, which means our engine paramedics are responding with the BLS ambulance to transport to hospitals. She touched on additional highlights, including the City EMT program, the addition of two ambulances delivered in December, new issues around EMS technology and Research, and the Station 49 toy drive. She also touched on Community Paramedicine and the various community paramedic units where they encountered 19,339 folks during the year. Her report is attached: <https://sf-fire.org/media/2694/download?inline>

Commissioner Fraser thanked Chief Tong for her interesting report and acknowledged that what she is talking about is probably the most difficult multi-layered problem we have right now in all of San Francisco. She confirmed that the difference between emergency medicine dispatch and fire response dispatch is calls that go through the 9-1-1 call center at the Department of Emergency Management and those calls are answered by a dispatcher who will determine whether or not it's a medical or fire and once it's defined as a medical call, it will go through the emergency dispatching process which is a series of questions that are asked of the caller to identify.

Vice President Nakajo recommended that the commissioners do a site visit at DEM and watch how the dispatch goes out.

There was no public comment.

**7. OVERVIEW OF THE CITY'S BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS AND PROCESS FOR FISCAL YEARS 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 [Discussion]**

Presentation from Mark Corso, Deputy Director of Finance and Planning, on the Fire Department's operating budget for Commission review and discussion. Overview of City's budget process, Mayor's Office Budget Instructions, and Fire Department budget updates and priorities for the upcoming budget process.

Mr. Corso presented to the Commission the City's fiscal update, budget instructions, and timelines. He mentioned that the mayor's office, controller's officer, and the Board of Supervisors' budget and legislative analyst take a look at all of the various fiscal metrics of the city and put together city financial projects as part of the overall Joint Report which gives an overall update to the city's financial plan over the next five years. He added that last year in the budget process there was a lot of good news but this year, unfortunately, is a different story as the city is projecting a 728-million-dollar deficit over the next two years. His report is attached: <https://sf-fire.org/media/2695/download?inline>

Commissioner Collins asked why the city projections don't assume a recession and what will we do. Mr. Corso responded that in general what they have done in the past is when there's been a significant event, for example, COVID, not outside of the budget process but during the year, there's been a request for mid-year reductions across the city and if there is not a recession that occurs during the budget process but after the budget's been approved, most likely, the Mayor's office will come to departments for potential reductions during the year.

Commissioner Fraser also asked for the information ahead of time.

Commissioner Morgan stated the boom can only go on for so long and he thinks it is smart to tone down the budget a little gradually as presented.

Vice President Nakajo thanked Mr. Corso for his very clear and comprehensive presentation. He confirmed that the Fire Department has been asked to reduce its budget by five percent in the first year (6.9 million) and 8 percent in the second year (11 million).

President Feinstein stated her concern that the Fire Department over the past two years has been pushed to do more and accomplish different tasks and it costs money, staff, and equipment, and wanted to know what the plan was to push back. Mr. Corso responded that they work with the mayor's budget office to identify those areas where if it's a new program or new service that is being requested of the Department, they outline the actual costs of those services to make sure they are funded then identifying the additional needs that they have come along with those services down the line or immediately.

There was no public comment.

**8. ADDENDUM TO EXISTING MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO AND THE SAN FRANCISCO FIRE DEPARTMENT *[Discussion and possible action]***

Discussion and possible action to approve an addendum to the existing five-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Fire Department and City College of San Francisco.

Mr. Corso presented the MOU and explained the changes. The MOU is attached: <https://sf-fire.org/media/2696/download?inline>

Public Comment: Retired Captain Jim Connors spoke in support of the MOU.

Vice President Nakajo Moved to approve the addendum to the MOU. Commissioner Morgan Seconded. The motion was unanimous.

**9. FIRE COMMISSION ANNUAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE 2023 *[Discussion and possible action]***

Discussion and possible action to adopt the 2023 Annual Statement of Purpose.

Vice President Nakajo moved to adopt the 2023 Annual Statement of Purpose. President Feinstein Seconded. The motion was unanimous.

Commission Secretary Conefrey read the statement into the record.

There was no public comment.

**10. FIRE COMMISSION ELECTION OF OFFICERS *[Discussion and possible action]***

President Feinstein stated that it has been a true honor to serve as president for the past two years. She commended her colleagues, who are willing to give their time to serve the people of San Francisco. She described her experiences as President and expressed her gratitude to the command staff as well as everyone who works at headquarters and keeps the department running. She expressed her heartfelt thanks to everyone working in the field as well as Fire Commission Secretary.

a. Nomination and election of Commission President.

President Feinstein nominated Vice President Nakajo for President. Commissioner Morgan Seconded. The motion was unanimous and Vice President Nakajo accepted.

b. Nomination and election of Commission Vice-President.

Commissioner Fraser nominated Commissioner Morgan as Vice President. President Feinstein Seconded. The motion was unanimous.

**11. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 12**

Public comment on all matters pertaining to Items 12 below, including public comment on whether to hold Items 12(b) and (c) in closed session.

There was no public comment.

**12. POSSIBLE CLOSED SESSION REGARDING PERSONNEL MATTERS**

**a. VOTE ON WHETHER TO CONDUCT ITEMS 12(b) and (c) IN CLOSED SESSION [Action]**

The Commission may hear Items 12(b) and (c) in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b) and Administrative Code Section 67.10(b).

Commissioner Morgan Moved to conduct items 12(b) and (c) in closed session. President Feinstein Seconded. The motion was unanimous.

Also, in closed session was Maureen Conefrey. Commissioner Collins recused herself since she was not involved in these matters.

**b. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE, CASE NO. 2022-05: COMMISSION DELIBERATIONS ON PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT, AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF FINDINGS OF FACT REGARDING COMMISSION'S DECISION ON VERIFIED COMPLAINT FILED WITH THE COMMISSION BY CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT [Action]**

At a meeting on September 29, 2022, regarding the above-referenced matter, the Commission deliberated and reached a decision on employee non-disciplinary separation. The Commission is now considering proposed Findings of Fact in relation to that decision.

**c. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE, CASE NO. 2022-06: COMMISSION DELIBERATIONS ON PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT, AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF FINDINGS OF FACT REGARDING COMMISSION'S DECISION ON VERIFIED COMPLAINT FILED WITH THE COMMISSION BY CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT [Action]**

At a meeting on October 19, 2022, regarding the above-referenced matter, the Commission deliberated and reached a decision on employee non-disciplinary separation. The Commission is now considering proposed Findings of Fact in relation to that decision.

**13. VOTE TO ELECT WHETHER TO DISCLOSE ANY OR ALL DISCUSSIONS ON ITEM 12 HELD IN CLOSED SESSION (San Francisco Administrative Code Section 67.12(a)) [ACTION]**

Commissioner Morgan Moved to not disclose discussions held in closed session. President Feinstein Seconded. The motion was unanimous with commissioners present.

**14. ADJOURNMENT** President Feinstein adjourned the meeting at 11:31 a.m.