

FIRE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

March 8, 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=43138

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

1. ROLL CALL

Commission President	Stephen Nakajo	Present
Vice President	Armie Morgan	Present
Commissioner	Katherine Feinstein	Excused
Commissioner	Marcy Fraser	Present
Commissioner	Paula Collins	Excused
Chief of Department	Jeanine Nicholson	Present.(remotely)
Bob Postel	Deputy Chief -- Operations	
Tom O'Connor	Deputy Chief – Administration	
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	
Simon Pang	Community Paramedicine	
Patrick D'Arcy	Airport Division	
Assistant Chiefs		
Brook Baker	Division II	
Bill Storti	Division III	

RAMAYTUSH OHLONE LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

President Nakajo read the Ramaytush Ohlone Land Acknowledgement.

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 Special Meeting on February 21, 2023.

Commissioner Fraser Moved to approve the minutes. President Nakajo Seconded. The motion was unanimous.

- Minutes from Regular Meeting on February 22, 2023.

Vice President Morgan Moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Fraser Seconded. The motion was unanimous.

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 February 22, 2023, 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 mentioned that she would be attending a women's history event today and the St. Patrick's Day Parade on Saturday. She touched on the selection process for the 132nd academy class. She stated that they have had a busy month with a multitude of fires and acknowledged the great work of her department members. She announced that she has been meeting with Supervisors to discuss budget issues. She added that she met with labor management and although they are not concerned with staffing needs, they are concerned about retention and losing senior folks to pass their knowledge on with such a young department. She mentioned that last week the Rotary Club of San Francisco had an award ceremony where Battalion Chief Matt Cannon and Paramedic Anthony Chiacco were recognized for their outstanding work.

There was no public comment.

REPORT FROM OPERATIONS, DEPUTY CHIEF ROBERT POSTEL

Report on overall field operations, including greater alarm fires, Bureau of Fire Prevention & Investigation, Training within the Department., and Airport Division, including an update from Assistant Deputy Chief Patrick D'Arcy.

Chief Postel reported on Operations during February 2023. He mentioned that there were 12 working fires, one of which was a third alarm house explosion on 22nd Avenue which he described in detail and acknowledged the incredible work of the crews. He also described in detail the single-alarm fire at 207 14th Avenue, and he acknowledged Willie Wong for his efforts in rescuing one person that was shimmying up a drainpipe trying to escape the fire below. He also acknowledged the crews for their great work at that incident. He touched on the Bureau of Fire Prevention and Investigation, and the Division of Training. He stated that Chief D'Arcy will present on the Airport Division. His report is attached: <https://sf-fire.org/media/2728/download?inline>

Vice President Morgan commended all the firefighters who displayed their talents in responding to the numerous fires during February, especially the house explosion on 22nd Avenue.

Commission Fraser stated she is looking forward to hearing more about the response time issue and the study that they are doing about traffic calming installations. Chief Postel responded that they are going to compare similar corridors; one that has been changed with traffic calming treatments to one that hasn't had changes and analyze response times and see if the corridor with the traffic calming treatments is slowing them down. Commissioner Fraser thinks having real data will be helpful. She acknowledged going to the live fire demo on Treasure Island and was humbled and honored to be a part of it.

President Nakajo thanked Chief Postel and acknowledged his expertise, experience, and detailed narrative in describing the significant fires, especially the explosion on 22nd Avenue as well as the one on 14th Avenue.

Chief D'Arcy gave an overview of the Airport Division. He stated that the Airport Division supports the Fire Department's mission by providing San Francisco International Airport with high-quality fire and EMS response, as well as fire prevention services to meet the needs and mission of the San Francisco International Airport. He added that they have 105 members working out of three stations and the entire airport property is eight square miles as well as 10 square miles of the Bay. His presentation is attached: <https://sf-fire.org/media/2729/download?inline>

Vice President Morgan thanked Chief D'Arcy for his descriptive report and stated he likes the idea of bike medics. He confirmed that for significant events they get help from surrounding cities such as Burlingame, South San Francisco, Millbrae, and San Bruno.

Commissioner Fraser thanked Chief D'Arcy for his report and stated she is amazed at the number of skills and services that are provided at the Airport and she would love to visit the Airport Division and see what they are doing. She confirmed that they can pump water from the bay if necessary. She also confirmed that the bike medics are SFFD employees, and the ambulance crews are provided by AMR because of the location in San Mateo County.

President Nakajo thanked Chief D'Arcy for his comprehensive report and stated what a great experience it is for the commissioners to visit the Airport Fire Department and to see the rigs, tour the boat area, and meet the members and he recommends they take Chief D'Arcy up on his offer for a tour. President Nakajo confirmed that the fire inspectors that work at the airport are SFFD employees and work under Fire Marshal Cofflin.

There was no public comment.

REPORT FROM EMS AND COMMUNITY PARAMEDICINE, DEPUTY CHIEF SANDRA TONG

Report on the EMS and Community Paramedicine Divisions and overview by Assistant Deputy Chief Simon Pang on the reconfiguration of the Street Crisis Teams.

Chief Tong provided her February report. Chief Tong stated that they had an average of 356 calls per day during February. They also saw the return of in-person training at Station 49. She announced that class number nine, a paramedic Level 2 class started a couple of weeks ago and there are seven members slated to graduate from that class. She commended several employees for their exceptional skills including Paramedic Anthony Chiacco, Captain Lisa Phyliss, and EMT John Lee. She mentioned that one of the things that have changed due to the reconfiguration of the SCRT and Wellness Teams is the removal of behavioral health clinicians which means a lot of the on-scene work that will be happening for 51/50 holds will be done by Community Paramedic captains. She added that they had the pleasure of hosting Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis and the California Professional Firefighters President Brian Rice where they spoke about the work that the Community Paramedicine Teams have been doing and how those street teams came about. Her report is attached: <https://sf-fire.org/media/2727/download?inline>

Chief Pang provided an update on the reconfiguration of the Street Crisis Teams. He stated that the Street Crisis Response Team which first started in November 2020, and the Street Wellness Response Team, which started in January 2020 have been doing very good work. In June of 2022, they cut over from police response to an entirely Street Crisis Response for acute behavioral crises with the backstop being EMS if there weren't enough Street Crisis Response Teams available in the street. He added that with that, they inherited over 14,000 calls that the police used to respond to, and now when they respond to a call, 30 to 40 percent of the time they manage to get someone into appropriate care which also means that 50 to 70 percent of the people they engage with choose to remain in the community. He added that there are many barriers they run into such as a lack of available places to take people; a short supply of acute psychiatric beds at the local hospitals and patients that don't remain connected to care. He acknowledged that one of the reasons for the reconfiguration was they thought that the valuable resource of behavioral health clinicians would be the most appropriate resource to be added to the follow-up team so that the people who are in the street can receive robust, persistent follow-up care and they may develop a trusting relationship with someone, so they can get them into care. Another reason for the reconfiguration was it was confusing to have so many teams and they wanted to combine teams and have one versatile team that can handle all the workload and improve operational efficiency. He provided other barriers and criticisms as well as budget constraints.

Vice President Morgan stated he understands the reconfiguration and he's on board with it.

Commissioner Fraser also stated she is on board with the configuration. She confirmed that individuals engaged by SCRT are followed up by a social worker from the Department of Public Health. She also expressed her concern to make sure the pipeline of care and interventions doesn't just stop because of a lack of resources.

President Nakajo thanked Chief Tong and Chief Pang for their detailed narrative reports. He acknowledged how important language access is when dealing with non-English speaking patients. He also recognizes the importance of reconfiguring the street teams to accomplish efficiency, budget, and man/woman power to be effective as well as our responsibility is the response to the patient. He added that the commissioners need to understand it clearly as well as they move forward because there are still some moving pieces and budget concerns in terms of being able to pull it off. He announced that Chief Pang will be awarded the SPUR award.

There was no public comment.

5. ADJOURNMENT President Nakajo adjourned the meeting at 10:47 a.m.