

SAN FRANCISCO FIRE COMMISSION

**FIRE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

Wednesday, December 12, 2018

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

The Video can be viewed by clicking this link:

http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=180&clip_id=32009

Vice President Nakajo called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Commission President	Ken Cleaveland	Present
Commission Vice President	Stephen Nakajo	Present
Commissioner	Michael Hardeman	Present
Commissioner	Francee Covington	Present
Commissioner	Joe Alioto Veronese	Present arrived at 9:06 a.m.
Acting Chief of Department	Mark Gonzales	Present
Chief of Department	Joanne Hayes-White	Arrived at 9:38 a.m.
Jeanine Nicholson	Deputy Chief --Administration	
Dan DeCossio	Bureau of Fire Prevention	
Tony Rivera	Support Services	
Michael Cochran	Homeland Security	
Khai Ali	Airport	
Joel Sato	Training Division	
Assistant Chiefs		
Robert Postel	Division 2	
Lorrie Kalos	Division 3	
Staff		
Mark Corso	Deputy Director of Finance	
Tony Boone	Director of Occupational Environmental Health and Safety	

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Steve Aker, Fire Chief for Sonoma Valley Fire and Rescue Authority presented a plaque to the SFFD in recognition for their service a bit more than a year ago when their community faced the Nuns Fire and SFFD was one of the first agencies to send a Strike Team and performed admirably, heroically and were instrumental in saving the downtown area of the community of Glen Ellen. He added that they wanted to show their appreciation and acknowledge the service of the fine men and women of the SFFD that came up and helped them in their time of need. He also introduced retired SFFD firefighter Bill Norton, Board member Brian Brady and Administrative Battalion Chief Jim Comiski.

John Choy, president of the Asian Firefighter's Association, talked about the transfer of member Doug May from Station 2 in Chinatown to the Airport and that they should reconsider the transfer as FF May is bilingual and serves the community at Station 2 well.

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

Discussion and possible action to approve meeting minutes.

- Minutes from Regular Meeting on November 14, 2018.

Commissioner Covington Moved to approve the above meeting Minutes. Commissioner Hardeman Seconded. Motion to approve above Minutes was unanimous.

- Minutes from Regular Meeting on November 28, 2018.

Commissioner Covington Moved to approve the above meeting Minutes. Commissioner Hardeman Seconded. Motion to approve above Minutes was unanimous.

There was no public comment.

4. CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT'S REPORT [Discussion]

REPORT FROM CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT, JOANNE HAYES-WHITE

Report on current issues, activities and events within the Department since the Fire Commission meeting on November 28, 2018, including budget, academies, special events, communications and outreach to other government agencies and the public.

Chief Hayes-White returned from the event downstairs where they were recognizing the one-year anniversary of Mayor Edwin Lee's death and she asked that she be able to submit her report in writing. She announced some very sad news regarding an active employee that was traveling into work today and was killed in an auto accident. She sent condolences to his loved ones and his family.

REPORT FROM OPERATIONS, DEPUTY CHIEF MARK GONZALES

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

Chief Gonzales reported on activities for the month of October. He stated that there was one greater alarm during the reporting period. It was on November 9, 2018, in Golden Gate Park at the Polo Fields. He mentioned that all units did a good job, with Chief Hale as the incident commander. The fire was determined to be incendiary. He touched on other notable incidents, including a first alarm at 1335 Laguna, with no injuries and another first alarm at 745 Capitol, also with no injuries. He described a careful technical rescue where a woman was trapped under a car, she was saved and will survive, and her family was grateful for the Department's work. He stated that on November 8, 2018, they sent out mutual aid responses, some to LA and some to Butte County and they all did a great job. He read off some of the social media responses that have been received over the reporting period. His complete report is attached:

https://sf-fire.org/sites/default/files/COMMISSION/Fire%20Commission%20Support%20Documents%202015/ops_0.pdf

Commissioner Covington thanked Chief Gonzales for his thorough report and asked how many ambulances are anticipated to be delivered to Station 49 and when and how the design was finalized. Chief Rivera responded that they currently are in the process of ordering 15 new ambulances for the EMS Division and they expect delivery of 10 of the units in mid to late February and five additional units within 60 to 90 days thereafter. He added that they had the apparatus committee, EMS Division leaders, and many of the rescue captains involved in the process of looking at what would work in terms of the City's unique topography and the types of medical calls they respond to, and they reached out to other fire departments and private ambulance companies and they were able to find an existing ambulance based on the platform, which is a Ford E-35 Chassis. He added that the vehicle will have a smaller overall footprint and will not be as tall as the current vehicles and will be much narrower and not as long. There will also be a 350-degree camera for the driver which will allow them to navigate through the streets, where they will be able to see pedestrians and bicyclist around the vehicle.

Commissioner Covington asked about an update on security measures at the new Ambulance Deployment Facility and suggested incorporating surveillance at that property which will have all kinds of medicines and other drugs to assist the population. She asked for further explanation on the change in the fentanyl deployment. Chief Molloy explained how and who administers pain medication on the ambulances, and that they are currently are using morphine. He added that the medical directors for the city and the EMS Agency want them to switch over to fentanyl as they see it as a much better medication for the patients, and the Department is in the process of switching over, doing training and is now on the ambulances. He added that they have deployed fentanyl to patients who are having pain on a scale over six per the county policy.

Commissioner Hardman thanked the Chief for his report and stated he was sad to hear the news of the member killed in the car accident. He took the opportunity to congratulate outgoing president Tom O'Connor and thanked him for all his advice and his stepping forward to lead Local 798. He also mentioned that he was at an electrical inspector's luncheon where he ran into Chief Pruitt, who was the most popular guy in the room, and he represented the Fire Department very well. He also touched on the EMT graduation at the City College Theater and the bike medics at the airport.

Commissioner Veronese wants to make sure that the Department is on top of the Prop C money since 38 percent of the calls are going to homeless people and that the department should be getting some of that money and he would like to get further updates on that. He confirmed that the opening of Station 16 and Station 5 are way behind schedule and would like updates on those delays and asked if there is anything the Commission can do to get it finished sooner.

Chief Hayes-White stated that they will be completed before her retirement, but hopefully well before. Commissioner Veronese was happy seeing a reduction in calls to 9-1-1- from the top 20 frequent callers, which means that EMS-6 is working and is being effective. He mentioned that he still thinks DPH should be doing more in dealing with the homeless issues.

Commissioner Veronese confirmed that the issue with SFMTA regarding bike protected parking on upper Market Street has been resolved. Chief Hayes-White added that the Department has a liaison that works directly with SFMTA and that person is Captain Chad Law.

Vice President Nakajo confirmed that on Chief Gonzales' report on page 7, where it says "suppression members will work in an overtime capacity on ambulances", does not reflect a

staffing shortage, it's due to members who are on vacation and have called in sick. He also confirmed that the 125th academy class will start on January 28, 2019, and not everyone has been selected for the class at this time.

President Cleaveland asked the Fire Marshal for an update on the number of arson cases that are currently pending. Fire Marshal DeCossio responded that he prefers to call them fire investigations and they currently have 56 open investigations, and not all are incendiary. President Cleaveland asked Chief Molloy about the dangers of fentanyl v. Morphine. Chief Molloy responded that both are opioids and they administer them as pain medications and the dose they give is considerably less than what people are taking and overdosing on. He added that whenever you give an opioid, you have to continue to monitor the patient and monitor their vital signs to make sure everything stays stable and that they are regulated by the dose that they give, just enough to take the pain away or to help ease the pain to make them more comfortable. He confirmed that the fentanyl is kept secured on the apparatus.

5. DISCUSSION OF DESIRABLE QUALITIES FOR THE NEXT SAN FRANCISCO FIRE CHIEF. THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND SFFD TO PROVIDE INPUT TO THE COMMISSION REGARDING THE NEXT FIRE CHIEF

[Discussion]

Shon Buford, Treasurer of Local 798, stated he would like the commission to pick a chief from within the department, as 798 believes that there are a lot of qualified candidates from within the department who would be able to serve well as the chief. He added that they are also asking that the commission move forward with this process in a nice pace to where hopefully, the new chief will be able to work within the budget process.

Stephen Martinpinto thanked the Chief for her service to the city and mentioned that she has accomplished a lot in her tenure. He added that as she passes the torch onto the next chief, he would like to see that there is an emphasis on an adequate training facility, maximizing the talents of the people in the department, and someone that would continue to improve the promotion system.

Katherine Alba, 20-year firefighter of the Fire Department thinks one of the greatest qualities she would like to see in the next chief would be someone that has come up through the ranks from the SFFD. She doesn't think there is a need to go outside of the department to find a chief.

John Choy, a 25-year member of the department would like to see the next chief come from within the SFFD, not someone from the outside. He added that the next chief needs to have gone through SFFD experiences and need to support the Cancer Foundation and understands San Francisco Firefighters and the challenges they face daily.

Sig Wallin, a retired member of the SFFD would strongly encourage to promote a chief from within.

Bryant Rubenstein, 29 years with the SFFD stated that when Mayor Breed was asked what her ideal candidate for chief would be, she responded that it would be someone from within the department and Chief Rubenstein shares that response along with most of his colleagues that the desire should be someone who has come up through the ranks, paramedic, firefighter,

lieutenant, captain, served as a BC or an AC for a number of years, and has demonstrated their ability to lead from within the department so that they would then take that to the next level and lead the Department.

Lt. Steve Maguire congratulated Chief Joanne Hayes-White on her career. He added that qualifications he would like to see in the next chief maybe someone who is of Latino origin and someone from within the Department.

Firefighter Adam Wood thinks that it's important, just as it has been over Chief Hayes-White's tenure, to have a chief that comes up from the ranks of the SFFD, and who is familiar with the Department and the City and someone who can work well with Local 798.

Commissioner Veronese acknowledged Chief Demmons for being present at the meeting and asked him if he would like to talk about qualifications for the next chief.

Chief Demmons commented that he thinks the most important criteria is that the next chief care about each and every person under their command and to hold all members accountable that do not do their job the way they should. He also commented on the unique attributes of San Francisco, including overhead wires, topography, and equipment. He also mentioned that there is a wealth of talent in the San Francisco Fire Department. He thanked all the members of the SFFD for what they do each and every day, on and off duty, to help the citizens.

Commissioner Veronese thanked all the speakers for attending the meeting and for stating their desires for the next fire chief. He also suggested that the current Chief can perhaps submit a list of questions she thinks would benefit the commissioners during the interview process.

Vice President Nakajo acknowledged Chief Demmons and thanked him for his presence and his remarks. He also thanked all the speakers that came forward and gave their input on what they want to see in the next fire chief. He touched on his experience when they hired from outside the department. He added that he thinks it's important that the commission inform the public as to what the process is and that they are up against a pretty aggressive calendar.

Commissioner Hardeman acknowledged Chief Demmons and stated that he recently had lunch with retired Chief Tobacco a couple of weeks ago seeking his advice, as well as many people's advice on their opinion, on what they want to see in the new chief and one common response was to hire someone from within. He invited Captain Joe Driscoll to speak. Captain Driscoll stated that looking for a new chief is not about numbers other than you want to calculate how many people survive and quoted a person who was very good at leading and was very successful in a number of missions he accomplished both in training, as well as real life, was "it is 10 percent planning and 90 percent execution". He added that the key thing the Chief of Department needs is command, and if you do not understand command in the Fire Department, you cannot lead. Commissioner Hardeman confirmed that the commission will interview candidates and send names to the Mayor, but the Mayor has the final decision on naming the new fire chief.

Commissioner Covington was pleased that so many people showed up today to express their views on the next fire chief and she thanked President Cleaveland for putting the item on the agenda again after concerns were expressed at the last meeting that there was a poor turn out for the topic. She added that it is important that people have the opportunity to have a full,

open, and transparent process and to have their voices heard. She acknowledged Chief Demmons and the other stars that came and spoke.

President Cleaveland complimented everyone who came and spoke and thought it was very important input that was needed. He thanked former Chief Demmons for taking the time to come and bring his big smile to the Commission meeting as well as his thoughts.

6. CANCER PREVENTION FOUNDATION PRESENTATION [Discussion]

Tony Stefani, President of the Cancer Prevention Foundation to present an update on the Cancer Prevention Foundation and recent studies conducted.

Tony Stefani, who spent the majority of his career at Station 1, first as a lieutenant at Rescue 1, and then as a captain at Rescue 1. He mentioned that in 2000 when he was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer, transitional cell carcinoma in his right renal pelvis, it basically ended his career. During his treatment and recovery, another firefighter came down with the transitional cell carcinoma at Station 1, followed by a third, a fourth, and then finally a fifth member all over a five-year period. He said his urologist at UCSF said that there was a definite problem that needed to be looked at so he approached the administration, Chief Hayes-White as well as Local 798 with the idea of putting a nonprofit Cancer Foundation together dedicated to the early detection and prevention in cancer in both active and retired San Francisco firefighters and it has been in existence since 2006. He talked about the surveys that were sent and the challenges they faced, such as not knowing how many retired firefighters had succumbed to this insidious disease. He touched on the funding received, the setup of the 501(3)(c) account, and the voluntary screening they have put in place including various findings and results. He also touched on the dangers of flame retardant chemicals and the toxicity of those chemicals and how they are causes of cancer seen in firefighters. He mentioned that they have gone before the state legislative committees trying to work at the root of the problem to help eliminate some these chemicals. He talked about the Chicago Tribune's in-depth investigative study and report on the chemical industry and how they had fabricated an organization called Citizens for Fire Safety, and how they deceived the general population, as well as fire chiefs throughout the United States in order to keep their five-billion-dollar industry in business by continually using flame retardant chemicals. He added that it exposed these companies and brought some favorable changes. He talked about the 2010 study conducted by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health which looked at the causes of death of firefighters dating back 50 years. He touched on the breast cancer study, wildland fire exposure study and the necessity for firefighters to be better protected in these situations. His presentation is attached:

Adam Wood touched on a couple of Department specific developments that are going on, including the long-term study involving San Francisco, Chicago, and Philadelphia that was extended through the renewal of the Zadroga Act in New York.

Public Comment: Firefighter John Choy stated he had the pleasure of working with Tony Stefani when he was a captain on Rescue 1 at Station 1 on the Sea Watch and he cannot stress how important the Cancer Foundation is. He mentioned that he was diagnosed with testicular cancer and that the Foundation is at the forefront basically fighting for the lives of the firefighters.

Commissioner Veronese thanked Tony Stefani for his presentation and John Choy for sharing his personal information with the commission. He added that Cancer is an issue that is very close to him as his father died of cancer at 49 years of age. He asked if the Department could be doing more in using resources so that the Foundation wouldn't have to go out and find private money and suggested that once the Grant Writer is on board, they can apply for federal and state money. Tony responded that the Department at this point is doing enough, including standard operating procedures for decontamination and the overhaul process. Commissioner Veronese suggested that we ask the Boston Fire Department to come and make a presentation on what a state of the art procedures are for decontamination. Tony provided the following website where they can accept donations: <https://www.sffcpf.org/>.

Commissioner Covington thanked Mr. Stefani for his presentation and mentioned that they hear of these things in bits and pieces, and it's very good to have a complete overview of the health challenges that members of the Department face on a daily basis. She also confirmed that Local 798 gave \$100,000 so the foundation could be founded, and that they received approximately \$50,000.00 through the Combined Charities that the City and County of San Francisco offers to their employees as a tax-exempt contribution directly from their paychecks. Mr. Stefani added that Dr. Rachel Morello-Frosch from UC Berkeley wrote a 106-page grant proposal to the California Breast Cancer Foundation for the biomonitoring study that is currently in place and the grant was accepted and funded for \$600,00.00 and Local 798 also contributed \$20,000 a year toward that grant, as well as the SFFCPF contributed an extra \$10,000 a year toward the grant. Commissioner Covington asked the Department Occupational Hygienist, Tony Boone, to give the commission some ideas as to what it is that the Department is doing well and where future needs may lie. Mr. Boone stated that Mr. Stefani hit the nail on the head with the decon policy. He added that they are working feverishly to get the decon policy approved but it must be spread universally, and that process takes a while. Chief Rivera spoke about how the station exhaust extractors work, which is to divert the exhaust from the vehicle during startup and when the vehicle comes back from a call. Commissioner Covington stated that she wants people to be cognizant of the fact that this is a serious problem and it is getting serious attention, that there is a lot being done, even though a lot of people may not be aware of that.

Chief Hayes-White applauded the efforts of retired captain Tony Stefani and the San Francisco Firefighters Cancer Prevention Foundation and as Commissioner Covington said, work is being done, but there can always be more work and more funding and studies. She thanked Chief Rivera and his staff at Support Service for the phenomenal job in those efforts, including switching over to renewable diesel in 2015. She added that many of the gas-powered tools have been replaced with electric tools, cordless to be mindful of the continued exposures the members face. She indicated that they do have an overhaul policy that went into effect in 2016 and is still in place as well as wash extractors, many of which have been grant funded. She added that it's a three-way partnership between the Union, the Cancer Prevention Foundation, and the Department because their members are the greatest asset and resource and they want to protect them to the extent that they can and keep them safe in the workplace.

Commissioner Hardeman thanked Tony for his report and thought he did a fantastic job with the chronology of the history of the Foundation.

President Cleaveland thanked Mr. Stefani and the Foundation for making the presentation today. He asked for clarification on the NAC antioxidant that is not available as an antidote. Tony explained that NAC or N-Acetyl Cysteine is an antioxidant and it can be bought in any health food store and that he would send the report on how it works at the cellular level. They had a brief discussion on the IRB (Institutional Review Board) approval to put a study in place. President Cleaveland asked if the current turnout coats are treated with a fire retardant that is toxic. Chef Rivera responded that Support Services has been working with the Cancer Foundation and that the current turnouts that were just awarded to Honeywell for the SFFD do have the PFOA's that are at issue. He added that they are sealed within the garment itself, and they have annual testing that is required for all firefighters to turn in their equipment to be tested by the vendor and if any of the interior or the moisture barrier of the turnout is found to be in a condition where there could be some type of seepage or leakage or exposure to the member that garment is immediately taken out of service and the member is then issued a new replacement piece. White They are also working with Honeywell at a possible alternative for the moisture barrier in future contracts with the SFFD. He mentioned that they have to purchases all of their turnouts based on the NFPA standard and that standard requires moisture barrier qualification.

There was no public comment.

7. DRONE POLICY UPDATE [Discussion]

Update from Assistant Deputy Chief Michael Cochrane on the Drone Policy.

This matter was tabled at the call of the Chair.

9. COMMISSION REPORT [Discussion]

Report on Commission activities since last meeting on October 24, 2018.

Vice President Nakajo asked that when Commissioners Covington and Veronese present their retreat feedback if they could add an item on the importance of AWSS throughout the Richmond and Sunset District to their priority list.

There was no public comment.

11. AGENDA FOR NEXT AND FUTURE FIRE COMMISSION MEETINGS [Discussion]

Discussion regarding agenda for next and future Fire Commission meetings.

- Update on study for the training facility.
- Institutionalizing the relationship between SFFD and the Reserves, Youth Academy and City College
- Station 49 gate
- Drone policy

There was no public comment.

10. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED SINCE LAST COMMISSION MEETING

- Unsigned letter from the United Employees Group.

There was no public comment.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 12

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

There was no public comment.

12. POSSIBLE CLOSED SESSION REGARDING UNLITIGATED CLAIM AND PERSONNEL MATTERS

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

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

Commissioner Covington made a motion to conduct item 12(b) and (c), in Closed Session. Commissioner Hardeman seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved. (4-0; Cleaveland, Nakajo, Hardeman, Covington)

The Commission went into closed session at 11:47 a.m.

Also present was Deputy City Attorney, Brad Russi, and Claims Adjuster Remy Weiland.

b. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL –UNLITIGATED CLAIM

Conference with legal counsel to discuss existing unlitigated claim 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]

Unlitigated Claim

California State Automobile Association v. City and County of San Francisco

c. CASE NO. 2018-01: COMMISSION DELIBERATIONS AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON EMPLOYEE SUSPENSION APPEAL [Action item]

The appeal is from a three-calendar day suspension for violation of the Rules and Regulations as follows:

- Section 3901 - Unauthorized Use of Department Name
- Section 3902 - Unauthorized Use of Uniform
- Section 3905 - Familiarity with the Rules
- Section 3914 - Unauthorized Visit to Places of Amusement
- Section 3923 - Acts Detrimental to the Welfare of the Department

13. 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).

The Commission reconvened in Open Session at 12:07 p.m. President Cleaveland stated that there was nothing to report.

14. 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]

Vice President Nakajo Moved to not disclose discussions held in closed session. Commissioner Hardeman Seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. (4-0; Cleaveland, Nakajo, Hardeman, Veronese)

15. ADJOURNMENT President Cleaveland adjourned the meeting at 12:08 p.m. in honor of the late Mayor Ed Lee who died one year ago today.