

SAN FRANCISCO FIRE COMMISSION

FIRE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

Wednesday, August 9, 2017 - 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

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=28500

President Cleaveland called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

1. ROLL CALL

Commission President	Ken Cleaveland	Excused
Commission Vice President	Stephen Nakajo	Present
Commissioner	Michael Hardeman	Present
Commissioner	Francee Covington	Present
Commissioner	Joe Alioto Veronese	Present
Chief of Department	Joanne Hayes-White	Present
Raemona Williams	Deputy Chief – Administration	
Alex Balmy	Bureau of Fire Prevention	
Tony Rivera	Support Services	
Andy Zanoft	EMS	
Shane Francisco	Homeland Security	
Rudy Castellanos	Airport Division	
Jeff Columbini	Division of Training	
Assistant Chiefs		
Victor Wyrsh	Division 2	
William Storti	Division 3	
Staff		
Mark Corso	Deputy Director of Finance	
Elaine Walters	Finance Director	
Dr. Clement Yeh	Medical Director	

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 Regular Meeting on July 26, 2017.

Commissioner Hardeman Moved to approve the above meeting Minutes. Vice President Nakajo Seconded. Motion to approve above Minutes was unanimous.

There was no public comment.

5. 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 June 28, 2017, including budget, academies, special events, communications and outreach to other government agencies and the public.

Chief Hayes-White reported on events since the last meeting on July 26, 2017. She announced that Deputy Chief Mark Gonzales had to report to jury duty and that Deputy Chief Raemona Williams will be presenting the Operations Report today. She mentioned that the 2016-2017 fiscal year budget has been closed out and they are working in close collaboration with the Controller's office and the Mayor's office on the current budget. With regards to the academy classes, she noted that the 122nd class is in their 16th week and they look forward to graduating 43 members on September 8, 2017, at 10:00 a.m., at the Treasure Island training facility and that everyone is invited. She acknowledged the great work of the training staff, under the direction of Chief Jeff Columbini. She added that the 123rd class will be comprised of 54 members, 42 off the list and 12 coming from Station 49, and they are currently in the process of completing medical evaluations and anticipate a start date in late September. She acknowledged the good work done by Chief Columbini and Human Resource Director Jesusa Bushong who represented the department at the Civil Service Commission meeting involving the protest of the H-20 Lieutenants exam and the minimum qualifications of 5 years. She added that the Department creatively suggested that members that come into the Department with previous fire and fire/paramedic experience will be considered to substitute two years of that service, which was unanimously adopted and amended at the Civil Service Commission meeting. She touched on the strike team that was recently sent to assist at the Minerva fire in Plumas County on July 30, 2017, and was happy to report they all returned safe on August 4, 2017. She asked Vice President Nakajo to consider adjourning the meeting in honor and memory of retired Director of Community Service, Earl Gage, who entered the Department in 1955 as the first African American firefighter.

There was no public comment.

REPORT FROM OPERATIONS, DEPUTY CHIEF MARK GONZALES

Report on overall field operations, including greater alarm fires, Emergency Medical Services, Bureau of Fire Prevention & Investigation, Airport and status on the H-23 classification..

Chief Williams presented the Operations report on behalf of Chief Gonzales who was summoned to Jury Duty. Chief Williams reported on events from the month of July. She mentioned that there were two greater alarm fires during the reporting period. The first was a second alarm on July 7, 2017, which was a wildland fire at Maclaren Park, and burned 23 acres. No structures were affected and the SFFD worked closely with DEM, Recreation and Parks Department and the Unified School District. The second greater alarm was also a second alarm on July 14, 2017, at 1831 Polk Street. She described the fire in detail and stated that the cause of the fire was determined to be accidental due to an electrical fault or failure. She touched on other notable incidents including a bay rescue of a capsized boat near Treasure Island, deployment of strike teams to the Wall fire in Orville and the Detweiler fire in Mariposa, and a cliff rescue. Chief Williams read a few of the social media responses received by PIO Lt. Baxter. She announced that on July 1, 2017, members of the Command Staff, Fire Commission and members of the Department, celebrated the 20th year anniversary of EMS in the San Francisco Fire Department. With regards to other outreach efforts, there have been multiple public safety announcements, engine companies continue to pass out fire prevention and education materials while on calls or

out in the public. She touched on a few noteworthy incidents involving EMS, under Assistant Deputy Chief Andy Zano. She mentioned that under Fleet and Apparatus, they continue to work with Central Shops to keep the fleet in running order and with regard to the ambulance deployment facility, they continue to work with their partners at DPW and the architects on the building design. She reported on EMS-6, Division of Fire Prevention and Investigations and NERT. She concluded the report by stating that they continue to support bike safety through TASC and that response times during the reporting period were 8.58 minutes, which represents 94.78 percent on the scene under 10 minutes.

Commissioner Veronese asked for clarification on the EMS-6 encounters. Chief Williams responded that the definition of a high-frequency 9-1-1 caller is four or more San Francisco Fire Department patient care reports in 30 days. Chief Zano added that a patient encounter for EMS-6 means that it was somebody that they identified as a person in need of services, and they went out and either located that person or found the location the person was at and were able to try to get them into services to meet their needs. He confirmed that the EMS-6 team is to attend to people who have high-frequency 9-1-1 calls and address the issues that the individual has and alleviate the 9-1-1 calls. Commissioner Veronese voiced his concern on the department providing healthcare when they are in the business to provide emergency care and the cost of providing these services to frequent flyers.

Commissioner Nakajo asked Dr. Yeh to address some of Commissioner Veronese's concerns about the "frequent flyers". Dr. Yeh gave an overview of the concept of the EMS-6 program and offered to share his presentation that he presented to the Commission in March, reporting on 12 months of EMS-6 activities. He added that as an emergency physician, although the purpose is to take care of emergencies, they are also able to prevent emergencies and part of that is connecting people with healthcare and improving their health so they don't require emergency services quite as often. Commissioner Veronese expressed how he would like to learn more about the program and how he would like to do a ride-a-long.

Commissioner Covington responded to Commissioner Veronese's point of calling 9-1-1 and stated that if there was a way to discern over the phone whether or not a person was having an actual emergency, that would be helpful to the Department, but it isn't until members of the Department arrives on scene that they can ascertain whether or not it is an actual emergency and the Fire Department is the first line of defense. Commissioner Veronese stated that he sees a lot of the "frequent flyer" calls being the Department of Public Health and the Department of Homelessness' issues, with the proviso that the SFFD will show up if you dial 9-1-1. He added that if there is another department that is more appropriate for an EMS-6 type response, he's hoping that the SFFD is working close with those other departments to make sure that they know their role is the more appropriate department to handle the calls. Commissioner Covington responded that when EMS-6 arrives, they can help these callers access all of the services that are supplied by other departments. She stated that the medical side of the Fire Department was originally with the Health Department and now, those duties fall to SFFD since the merger. She added that the merger occurred at a time when there was not such a tremendous problem of homelessness currently occurring in the City and that the first responders from the Fire Department can help reduce the calls these folks are making to 9-1-1 by their frequent interactions and telling them where they can get the help they need and introduce them to a wider circle of support. Commissioner Covington asked Chief Hayes-White if the strategic plan has been printed and distributed to all of the members of the Department. Chief Hayes-White answered that it has not, but is in its final review and is anticipated to be completed this month. Commissioner Covington asked if members will be able to give feedback on the strategic plan.

Chief Hayes-White responded she anticipates an avenue to solicit feedback in writing through a general form or email submitted through the chain of command and will be available for the Commission to see. Commissioner Covington stated that she took a tour of the ladder shop and was fascinated to see how the ladders are built and she was wondering if the ladder team will be impacted during the anticipated relocation of Central Shops. Chief Rivera responded that he anticipated some growing pains and other issues when they first move, but in the long run, the new location will allow for better efficiency. They both acknowledged the great team that works on the ladders.

Vice President Nakajo appreciated the discussion on EMS-6 and he encouraged all of the commissioners to arrange a ride along. He talked about the merger of the ambulances from DPH to the Fire Department 20 years ago. He touched on his perception of the EMS-6 program and how it reduces the response of a truck, engine, and ambulance to 9-1-1 calls from “frequent flyers”. He acknowledged Chief Gonzales for his 16-page report and stated he enjoyed reading it as well as to Chief Castellanos for his hospitality when he and Commissioner Veronese visited the airport last week.

There was no public comment.

5. AGENDA FOR NEXT FIRE COMMISSION MEETING [Discussion]

Discussion regarding agenda for the August 23, 2017 regular meeting.

- Presentation from Lt. Baxter on Education and Outreach efforts.
- Future Public Safety Academy In An SFUSD High School

6. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 7

Public comment on all matters pertaining to Item 7 below, including public comment on whether to hold Items 7 (b), (c), and (d) in closed session.

Vice president Nakajo called for public comment. No member of the public came forward and Vice President Nakajo closed public comment. A short recess was taken to clear the room.

7. POSSIBLE CLOSED SESSION REGARDING EXISTING LITIGATION AND PERSONNEL MATTERS

a. VOTE ON WHETHER TO CONDUCT ITEMS 7(b), (c) AND (d) IN CLOSED SESSION [Action]

The Commission may hear Item 7(b) regarding existing litigation in closed session if it votes to invoke the attorney-client privilege (Government Code § 54956.9; Administrative Code § 67.10(d)). The Commission may hear Items 7(c) and (d) regarding personnel matters in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b) and Administrative Code Section 67.10(b).

The Commission went into closed session at 10:03 a.m.

b. 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:

*Price v. City and County of San Francisco
San Francisco Superior Court No. CGC-14-543349*

Commissioner Covington made a motion to conduct existing litigation and personnel matters in Closed Session. Commissioner Veronese seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved. (4-0; Nakajo, Hardeman, Covington, Veronese)

Chief Hayes-White and Deputy City Attorney Bond left the meeting for items 7(c) and (d) and Commissioner Veronese rejoined the meeting for Items 7(c) and (d).

c. CASE NO. 2016-04: COMMISSION DELIBERATIONS ON PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT, AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF FINDINGS OF FACT REGARDING COMMISSION'S DECISION ON EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE CONCERNING VERIFIED COMPLAINT FILED BY CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT AGAINST MEMBER, DATED SEPTEMBER 20, 2016, FOR VIOLATIONS AS FOLLOWS:

- Section 2004 – Restricted Passengers
- Section 3905 – Familiarity with the Rules
- Section 3907 – Safety Rules
- Section 3909 – False Reports
- Section 3921 – Inattention to Duty
- Section 3923 – Acts Detrimental to Welfare of Department
- Section 3941 – Use of Vehicles
- Section 4003 – Duty to Report Breach of Duty or Misconduct.

At a Special Meeting of the Fire Commission on May 25, 2017, the Commission found member guilty of violating the rules mentioned above, except Section 3909, and Commission imposed a penalty. The Commission is now considering proposed Findings of Fact in relation to that decision. *[Action item]*

d. CASE NO.: 2016-07 COMMISSION DELIBERATIONS ON PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT, AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF FINDINGS OF FACT REGARDING COMMISSION'S DECISION ON EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE CONCERNING MEMBER'S APPEAL OF 10-SUSPENSION FOR VIOLATION AS FOLLOWS:

- Section 1501 – Vehicle Operations Manual
- Section 3905 – Familiarity with the Rules
- Section 3923 – Acts Detrimental to the Welfare of the Department
- Section 3924—Disobedience
- Section 3925 – Insubordination
- Section 3939 – Loss or Damage of Tools and/or Equipment

At the Fire Commission meeting on July 12, 2017, the Commission deliberated on member's appeal of a 10-day suspension imposed by the Chief of Department and decided to sustain the charges against member and the penalty of a 10-day suspension. The Commission is now considering proposed Findings of Fact in relation to that decision. *[Action item]*

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

9. 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]*

The Commission reconvened in open session at 10:46 a.m.

On Item 7(b), by a unanimous vote of commissioners present (Nakajo, Hardeman, Covington,), the Commission voted to recommend to the Board of Supervisors for settlement approval of existing litigation in the Price v. CCSF matter, San Francisco Superior Court No.: CGC-14-543349.

On Item 7(c), by a unanimous vote of commissioners present (Nakajo, Hardeman, Covington, Veronese), the Commission voted to approve the Findings of Fact as amended for Fire Commission Case No.: 2016-04.

On Item 7(d), by a unanimous vote of commissioners present (Nakajo, Hardeman, Covington, Veronese) the Commission voted to approve the Findings of Fact as submitted for Fire Commission Case No.: 2016-07.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned in the memory of retired Firefighter, Director of Community Relations Earl Gage at 10:48 a.m.