

SAN FRANCISCO FIRE COMMISSION

**FIRE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

Wednesday, May 24, 2017 - 5:00 p.m.
City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 400, San Francisco, California, 94102

The Video can be viewed by clicking this link:

http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=180&clip_id=27968

President Cleaveland called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

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
Chief of Department	Joanne Hayes-White	Present
Mark Gonzales	Deputy Chief – Operations	
Raemona Williams	Deputy Chief – Administration	
Dan DeCossio	Bureau of Fire Prevention	
Tony Rivera	Support Services	
Rudy Castellanos	Airport Division	
Andy Zanolff	EMS Division	
Shane Francisco	Homeland Security	
Jeff Columbini	Division of Training	
Assistant Chiefs		
Ken Yee	Division 2	
Dave Franklin	Division 3	
Staff		
Mark Corso	Deputy Director of Finance	
Olivia Scanlon	Communication and Outreach Coordinator	
Jesusa Bushong	Human Resources 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 May 10, 2017.

Commissioner Covington Moved to approve the May 10, 2017 regular meeting Minutes. Commissioner Hardeman Seconded. Motion to approve above Minutes was unanimous.

There was no public comment.

4. CERTIFICATE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF APPRECIATION OF EMS DISPATCHER RYAN WON

Mr. Rob Smuts of Department of Emergency Management to recognize the outstanding work performed by Dispatcher Ryan Won.

Mr. Bob Smuts was welcomed by President Cleaveland. Mr. Smuts, the Deputy Director for the Department of Emergency Management and who oversees the Division of Emergency Communications presented a certificate to Ryan Won, who was the recipient of the EMS award for this year. He stated that Ryan has been with the DEM for 7 years and has answered thousands of calls and dispatched countless incidents, for both police, fire and medical. He went on to describe a call Ryan took in which a pregnant woman about to give birth. He acknowledged the wonderful job Mr. Won did handling that incident. Chief Hayes-White also acknowledged the great work done by Ryan and stated that two members of the Fire Department, Irene Ybarra and Daniel Nazaretto will also be receiving awards at tomorrow's awards ceremony, along with Mr. Won. Mr. Won thanked the Commission and Chief Hayes-White for the certificate. The Commissioners thanked him for doing a great job and questions and answers followed, along with a photo opportunity.

5. OVERVIEW OF THE 9-1-1 DISPATCH CENTER

Mr. Rob Smuts of the Department of Emergency Management to provide an overview of the operations of the 9-1-1- Dispatch Center.

Mr. Smuts gave a high-level overview of the 9-1-1 Dispatch Center. He explained in detail the attached slide show: <http://sf-fire.org/sites/default/files/COMMISSION/Fire%20Commission%20Support%20Documents%202015/EMS%20Presentation.pdf>

Mr. Smuts stated that call volume has increased significantly in the last few years, increasing 36 percent in the last five or six years and going from about 2500 calls per day up to about 3600 per day. He stated that slightly more than half are 9-1-1- calls, and the rest are non-emergency calls, most of them police non-emergency in nature. He added that the increase in call volume is one of two main factors that have impacted their service level in recent years, the second factor is a spike in personnel separations and retirements. He touched on the overall operations of a day in the life of a 9-1-1 dispatcher, the difference between a code 2 and code 3 call, the definition of basic life support and advanced life support, the number of technical changes that are still coming down the pike that should have a noticeable improvement in the time it takes for a unit to arrive on scene and the call answering goals in accordance with NFPA standards.

Commissioner Covington thanked Mr. Smuts for his presentation and stated that people think that when they call 9-1-1 with a fire-related emergency, that they are getting the Fire Department when actually they're getting the Department of Emergency Management at the 9-1-1 Center. She asked Mr. Smuts how they factor in people who say they call 91-1- and they never get a response. Mr. Smuts answered that if you call 9-1-1- and don't hang up, you will get a response, they have people that do hang up before the call gets answered. Should that happen, they track the number of abandoned calls and they call back everybody who hangs up. He added that many of those hang ups are accidental dials. He stated that when they are reaching their standards, it takes on average about four seconds to answer the call and in their worst month, it took about 11 seconds, but the call will be answered if you stay on the line even if every second feels like an eternity when you're looking for help. Commissioner Covington asked what they are doing to prevent burn out when they are so understaffed and have mandatory overtime. Mr. Smuts answered that it is one of the biggest challengers they have

and he is working with the Union on changing some aspects of scheduling, introducing a treadmill station and looking at every aspect that they can to relieve the stress of the job while still having people work quite a lot of hours. Commissioner Covington asked if there was a cluster of reasons as to why so many people wash out before finishing training. Mr. Smuts stated that some are dismissed for conduct or who did not successfully complete the phone or radio training portion and there are people who decide that the job really is much more intense than they had anticipated. Commissioner Covington suggested that they should provide as much information to interested pre-hires as possible, including the known challenges, the stress involved, mandatory overtime and things of that nature. Commissioner Covington confirmed with Mr. Smuts that there are national standards for 9-1-1 dispatchers, that they use simulated situations in training and that they hire people who have worked in other dispatch centers.

Commissioner Veronese asked for clarification on the service standard that Mr. Smuts mentioned. It was confirmed that the standard is to answer a call 90 percent within 10 seconds. Mr. Smuts explained the steps of when a call comes in that requires a response from the Fire Department. Commissioner Veronese asked what technology exists when a cell phone call comes in. Mr. Smuts explained that phones have three ways of determining a location, triangulation of cell phone towers, triangulation of Wi-Fi and a GPS device, but the 9-1-1 system only uses the first because they need to stay within FCC regulations. He added that they have written letters and testified at hearings to encourage the FCC to force the carriers to provide better information. Commissioner Veronese suggested that folks watching the meeting from home or work should get the word out about using the non-emergency number which is (415) 553-0123 which could reduce the 9-1-1 call volume almost in half. He thanked Mr. Smuts and mentioned that he was a huge fan of Ms. Kronenberg and he thinks they are doing a great job with the resources that they have and if there's anything the Commission can do to support them, he should let the Commission know.

Commissioner Hardeman stated he would like to take a tour of the 9-1-1 facility. He complimented Mr. Smuts on the improvements he's making. He asked how the wages and benefit packages for dispatchers compares to other departments. Mr. Smuts stated that they make less than Santa Clara but more than the rest of the Bay Area and that the structure that San Francisco has, where they are unified fire, police and medical as well as geographically unified, his dispatchers are doing more work than a typical dispatcher or a dispatcher really in any other agency that he can point to in the Bay Area. They also support more first responders in the field per dispatcher than other agencies. Commissioner Hardeman commented that he was glad Mr. Smuts acknowledged his appreciation and support of his work force.

Vice President Nakajo acknowledged all the hard work and support of Mr. Smuts and Director Kronenberg during the recent scrutiny and pressure they have been faced with. He mentioned the recent articles that have been in the news. He touched briefly on the history of the dispatch center which once had uniformed dispatchers and now has civilian dispatchers. He proceeded to go page by page of the above presentation for clarification and discussed the hiring plan to staff the office with dispatchers. Mr. Smuts stated that they have found full support by the Mayor's office and Board of Supervisors to get funding to staff their office. Vice President Nakajo suggested that they should explore hiring per-diem employees. Vice President Nakajo encouraged the commissioners to visit the 9-1-1 Center and thanked Mr. Smuts for his presentation.

President Cleaveland thanked Mr. Smuts for his very exhaustive report and mentioned that everyone has learned a lot about the 9-1-1 system. He asked Mr. Smuts if he could add one thing to his department, what that would be. Mr. Smuts answered, besides more trained staff, he would like to expand the building. They spoke about the creation of the ambulance working group and the Marvelous System that allows them to have calculated response times for any incident, and it also shows the six closest ambulances and helps with ambulance deployment positions.

There was no public comment.

6. OVERVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY STAFF COMMITTEE (TASC)

Assistant Deputy Chief Dan DeCossio to provide an overview of TASC.

Chief DeCossio explained that TASC is all about response times with regard to the Fire Department as well as access to the fire scene or medical emergency. He stated that the Department's role on the committee is a three-pronged approach, which includes the Bureau of Fire Prevention who enforce the regulations for Fire Department access that lives in the fire code in Section 503, Support Services which addresses operational needs of the fleet, turning radius of the rigs, slopes of the streets, etc., and Field Suppression input for fire ground tactics. He stated that the Transportation Advisory Staff Committee is headed by MTA and members consist of Fire, Planning, Police and Public Works Departments. Each department provides input, reviews proposals before the committee and those proposals are basically associated with any kind of street design changes in San Francisco. The input is considered and the committee provides a recommendation to the MTA Board of Directors on how to proceed with each proposal. He added that there are basically three outcomes from the decision; 1) object the proposal; 2) ask that it be placed on hold for further information; and 3) try to resolve the matter in other means. He explained different types of items they are presented at TASC, including bicycle paths and lanes, traffic calming devices such as speed humps and cushions and bulb outs. He touched on challenges that the department has faced, including chicanes, medians, lane reduction removal, traffic circles and paint and safety zones. He described scenarios of the challenges that have impacted the department because of the traffic calming devices as well as the ongoing challenge communicating with other department on what the Fire Department's needs are. He stated that they are working with the City Attorney to give written clarification on fire code versus transportation code and which one supersedes the other.

Commissioner Covington thanked Fire Marshal DeCossio for his presentation and stated that she had attended a number of internal TASC meetings. She asked for more information on the simulations that are conducted where it's determined what works and doesn't work for the Department. Chief DeCossio explained that the interested and potentially affected department bureaus go out to the intersection, street or bulb out that is scheduled to be installed and constructed and they perform "cone tests" with the appropriate measurements. They test the equipment and rigs to make sure they can function properly, such as being able to raise the aerial ladders safely and make safe turns without going into oncoming traffic. A general rule of thumb from the Fire Department's perspective is don't make a more hazardous condition. He stated that MTA is working with the department in developing turn templates that accurately reflect the department's fleet which has been helpful in the testing process. Commissioner Covington concluded by stating she requested this item be put on the agenda so that they can get a better picture of how to move forward to obviate some of the difficulties and impasses in the future.

Commissioner Veronese asked if Chief DeCossio will keep the Commission informed on the response from the City Attorney's Office. Chief Hayes-White stated she would keep them apprised.

Commissioner Hardeman thanked Chief DeCossio for his presentation and stated he was delighted he brought up the fact that buildings are going to be built taller in the near future and they need to think of the problems that will arise when they can't access water to suppress a fire or can't rescue somebody out of a building with a ladder truck and he would never vote to allow things to happen that obstruct the ability of the Fire Department to do its job.

There was no public comment.

6. CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT'S REPORT [Discussion]

REPORT FROM CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT

Report on current issues, activities and events within the Department since the Fire Commission meeting of April 12, 2017, 2017, including budget, academies, special events, communications and outreach to other government agencies and the public.

Chief Hayes-White's report covered events since the last meeting on May 10, 2017. She reported that the budget for this fiscal year remains on track for both revenues and expenditures and they go before the Budget and Finance Committee on June 16th and June 22nd and they will continue to advocate to maintain the current funding and will continue conversations with the Mayor's budget office in terms of enhancements if possible. She added that on May 12, 2017 the Budget Committee was reconvened and she appreciated President Cleaveland and Commissioner Alioto Veronese for attending and stated it was poorly attended even though they reached out to all members. In regards to academies, Chief Hayes-White stated the 122nd academy is in its fifth week and the 123rd academy is anticipated to start in late September. She touched on the good work of the Division of Training and the field chiefs who put on a battalion chiefs academy.

Chief Hayes-White stated that she met with Local 798 for their monthly labor management meeting, she attended a PG& E substation tour, and EMS function at John O'Connell High School to celebrate EMS week, and she met the new Chief of the Emergency Department at SF General, Dr. Chris Colwell. She asked President Cleaveland to consider adjourning the meeting in honor of three retired members of the department, Assistant Chief William Shaughnessy, Assistant Chief Dennis Callahan and Lieutenant Leroy Character.

Commissioner Hardeman thanked the chief for her report and announced that Joe Montana's father passed away yesterday.

There was no public comment.

REPORT FROM ADMINISTRATION, DEPUTY CHIEF RAEMONA WILLIAMS

Report on the Administrative Divisions, Fleet and Facility status, including any updates on Station 49 and the search for a new training facility, Finance, Support Services, Homeland Security and Training within the Department.

Chief Williams' report covered the period from April 27th to May 24, 2017. She mentioned that the Assignment Office staff is currently working on modifying the Station 49 schedule in anticipation of the upcoming EMS academies and staff has completed back filling the vacancies left by members who were admitted into the 122nd recruit academy. Under homeland Security, she mentioned that Chief Francisco participated in various meetings and training exercises and he continues to update the command staff on all suspicious and potential terrorist activities, including the recent Manchester bombings. He has also been planning the Bay to Breakers event, the Escape from Alcatraz swim, and Fleet Week. She touched on the Investigative Services Bureau, the Physician's Office, and Support Services, which included updates on Pump Station 1, Station 5, Station 16, ESER projects, and Station 49. Under Fleet Management, she reported that they have eight engines that are currently in production with 4 being delivered in August of this year and four more following shortly thereafter. She mentioned that the aerial ladder truck specifications are complete and out to bid with the

proposal due in June and they have all trucks outfitted with cordless extrication tools. With regards to NERT, she stated that Captain Arteseros continues to oversee the emergency preparedness training for the community throughout the city. She touched on the Fire Reserves.

Vice President Nakajo made a brief statement that when he mentioned at the last meeting the retirement dinner he attended, he forgot to mention that it was organized by Firefighter/Paramedic James Green. He also acknowledged that members of the audience, the Chief's staff, several Fire Reserve cadets from City College of San Francisco, and members of department, participated in the Special Olympics that were held at Lowell High School on May 16, 2017.

There was no public comment.

8. AGENDA FOR NEXT FIRE COMMISSION MEETING [Discussion]

Discussion regarding agenda for the June 14, 2017 regular meeting.

- Drone Policy as it relates to the Fire Service
- Budget update and overview

9. ADJOURNMENT

President Cleaveland adjourned the meeting in the memory of retired Assistant Chief William Shaughnessy, retired Assistant Chief Dennis Callahan; and retired Lieutenant Leroy Character at 7:41 p.m.