

**FIRE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES**

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**Wednesday, November 28, 2018 – 5:00 p.m.  
City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 400, San Francisco, California, 94102**

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The Video can be viewed by clicking this link:

[http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=180&clip\\_id=31895](http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=180&clip_id=31895)

President Cleaveland called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.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
Acting Chief of Department	Mark Gonzales	Present
Jeanine Nicholson	Deputy Chief --Administration	
Dan DeCossio	Prevention	
Tony Rivera	Support Services	
Michael Cochrane	Homeland Security	
Andy Zanoff	EMS	
Joel Sato	Division of Training	
Assistant Chiefs		
Brook Baker	Division 2	
Nicol Juratovac	Division 3	

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Tom Doudiet, retired Assistant Deputy Chief suggested that there are some non-negotiable requirements for the next Chief of Department. He added that the next Chief must recognize that their primary responsibility and the preservation of life and property is to prevent the city from being once again destroyed by firestorms following an earthquake, because if the city is destroyed by fire, thousands of lives will be lost, and nothing else that may have been accomplished in San Francisco up to that time will matter. He also suggested that the next Chief must understand that following a great earthquake, it can only be brought under control by a continuous and inexhaustible supply of water, which fortunately the City has available on three sides of the city in the Pacific Ocean and the Bay. He went on to explain the inadequate supply of water in the outer Richmond and Sunset Districts and described the limited water sources in those districts. He added that the next chief must not endorse the proposals being submitted as the SFPUC's Option 12 hydrant system and he provided binders with useful information that will clarify the issues that are most critical to the process of the selection of the next chief of the SFFD.

**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.

The minutes were tabled to the next meeting for approval as Commissioner Covington noted there were significant omissions from the minutes that she would like added.

There was no public comment.

**4. 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]**

Stephen Martinpinto, temporarily assigned to Engine 35 and is a fifth-generation San Franciscan would like to see in the next Chief someone who would be interested in forming a USAR team for SF, and he thinks it would boost preparedness to deal with any natural disaster or manmade terrorist attack as well as inject possible FEMA funding into the Department. He would also like the next chief to continue to hire more veterans.

Nancy Worful requested that the commission add an item to our next agenda specifically pertaining to adding a project to the Department's new 10-year capital plan to extend the original AWSS System with three new saltwater pump stations to serve all residential neighborhoods not presently protected with unlimited water. She added that the new chief should make the AWSS expansion a top priority. She also mentioned that the new chief must have the ability to effectively demonstrate independence on behalf of the Fire Department and to stand up to the SFPUC, who now owns the AWSS System, and who consistently fails to provide projects that will guarantee firefighters with enough auxiliary water to fight post-earthquake fires. She expressed her concerns with the SFPUC as well as it not being okay for the SFFD to not have their own standards for a new pipeline from Sunset Reservoir. She added that the PUC may own the AWSS assets, but the SFFD is the only beneficiary of the system and she suggested that they demand their rights. She provided the commission with a copy of her article in the Westside Observer.

James Dalessandro, author of 1906: A novel, who spent 30 years of his life studying this problem and studying what happened to San Francisco in 1906 and 1989 stated that the hiring of the new fire chief will be the most important hire the City may ever see in the Fire Department because the further we are from 1906, the closer we are to a repeat. He explained the history of past earthquakes and the lessons we should have learned and stated that the next chief has to have imagination, has to understand the history and has to put an end to this problem.

Lt. Buren, a 21-year member of the department stated that she agreed with the past speakers on characteristics they want in the next chief, and added firefighter experience, and knowledge of their job, vision, strength, leadership, integrity and maybe even some humor should also be considered. She also asked the commission to consider someone that will focus their attention and funds on health and wellness for the employees, training and someone who is able to work together to collaborate with other organizations in the city and communicating with the rank and file, and uniting every rank and division, from the command staff as a whole to all the divisions in the Department.

Commissioner Covington stated that she was happy that she pushed to have this item on the agenda and that the time of day was not the most opportune time, and that many people expressed to her that they couldn't be here today, but the few that did speak spoke eloquently and very specifically and she appreciates their comments.

Commissioner Veronese also thanked the people that spoke and that he thinks this is an important decision and that he was a little disappointed that they didn't hear from more members. He suggested that in order to really gauge the temperature and the needs of the members of the Department, he would be popping into the various stations to ask members to communicate with him on what they want in the next fire chief, and he would report back to the commission and suggested that maybe the other commissioners could do the same. He added that he wants to go into this decision with a lot of information and he wants to see a lot of candidates apply for the position.

Vice President Nakajo also thanked the individuals who took the time to come on short notice to express their desires in the next fire chief. He added that he thought the commission has opportunities to go to the rank and file and have further dialogue.

Commissioner Hardeman also thanked the speakers that came forward and expected to hear that everyone wants the same thing in the chief. He added that there are a lot of talented people in the department and he would be surprised if there was somebody from outside the department that could have the talent that the SFFD possess. He thinks they will have three wonderful candidates going forward. He also thanked Chief Tom Doudiet for his work on the auxiliary water over the years.

President Cleaveland confirmed that the deadline for filing applications is December 7, 2018, and suggested that an agenda item is added to the December 12, 2018 meeting allowing for another opportunity for additional comment on the attributes for a future fire chief. He acknowledged the people that came to speak, particularly the AWSS information as he knows it is something that has been discussed multiple times over the years with very little action.

#### **5. REPORT FROM ADMINISTRATION, DEPUTY CHIEF JEANINE NICHOLSON**

Report on the Administrative Divisions, Fleet and Facility status, Finance, Support Services, Homeland Security and Training within the Department.

Chief Nicholson reported on events for the month of October 2018. She mentioned that the Physician's Office is going to be busy over the next couple of months conducting physicals for the people that are going to be getting conditional offers of employment. With regard to Investigative Services Bureau, she announced they are in the process of conducting background investigations on people and meet and greets with those people for the next academy class. She stated that the Assignment Office was conducting vacation relief moves and vacation bidding begins tomorrow. With regard to Support Services, she mentioned that BOE has handled 70 plus field and equipment repairs and hundreds of calls for equipment. She stated that fleet has on order, six triple combination pumpers, engines with the pump, tank, and hose and they are currently being fabricated and that a team from the BOE, Local 798, and Central Shops are going to be traveling next week to Louisiana to conduct an inspection. She also mentioned that they have five more engines in addition to those six that are currently with the Office of Contract Administration as that request will have to go before the Board of Supervisors because they have gone over the \$10,000,000 contract but she does not see an issue with that as they have the Mayor's full support. She added that the construction of the new aerial trucks is underway and the first one is due in April and once they have that one and it meets the standards and expectations, they can order four more. They also have the approval of ordering

15 ambulances. She touched on the groundbreaking ceremony that took place today for the Ambulance Deployment Facility. She announced that they continue to work diligently for the completion of Station 16, but that the contractor has been very difficult to work with and he keeps extending the completion date which has been moved to December 10<sup>th</sup>. With regard to Station 5, she stated that they could not work the past couple of weeks due to smoke and rain so that completion date may also be extended. She touched on street projects with MTA, the Division of Training including the MOU with City College they are working on where they will be able to enroll academy members in City College and get remuneration for hours of training. It will also facilitate training and certifications for the members, not just academy members but also officers and state fire marshal classes. She added that the MOU is currently in the hands of the City Attorney's Office and will come to the Fire Commission for approval once it gets vetted by the city attorney. She touched on the upcoming H-3 L-1 class that is scheduled to graduate Friday, the Fire Reserves; NERT, Homeland Security and the wildland responses where the department had multiple deployments to different fires in Southern California and in Butte County. She stated that they sent Engine 9, Engine 11, and Engine 17 to the Woolsey Fire in Ventura and they received a letter of commendation from a Geoffrey D. Maloon, Acting Battalion Chief from the Milpitas Fire Department that worked with our teams. Chief Nicholson read the letter into the record.

Commissioner Veronese confirmed that the City College classes will get college credits for the people being hired in the recruit academy and will get college credits toward their degree and the department will get some reimbursement back. Commissioner Veronese suggested that the commission get a report on the AWSS to get some sort of reassurance that the Department is planning for a worst-case scenario. He also suggested that the commission stays on top of priorities such as going to the Mayor's office or the Board of Supervisors about getting an in-house person for fleet repair and other priorities previously discussed. He also wanted to make sure that we are using our statistics on homelessness to implement Proposition C and advocate for some of that money. Commissioner Veronese also confirmed that the liquidated damages recovered for the delay of Station 16 does not come to the Department, it goes to the General Fund and he thinks legislation should be drafted so that those monies come back to the SFFD. He also mentioned that he wants to stay on top of the Stress Unit resolution and that the deadlines outlined in the document are met. He announced that he wants to make sure that if we are still fighting wildland fires with wildland equipment, that the department has updated that equipment to make sure that the men and women of the SFFD have what is needed to fight the types of fires that they are fighting today.

Chief Gonzales stated that he had the privilege to represent Chief Hayes-White at the Huntington Park, Nob Hill Association where Captain Pablo Sequenza was awarded recognition for his wildland deployments.

There was no public comment.

**6. FIRE COMMISSION MEETING CALENDAR 2019** *[Discussion and possible action]*  
Discussion and possible action to adopt the 2019 Fire Commission Regular Meeting calendar.

Commissioner Hardeman Moved to approve the 2018 Fire Commission Meeting Calendar. Commissioner Covington Seconded. Motion to approve 2018 meeting calendar was unanimous.

There was no public comment.

**7. COMMISSION REPORT [Discussion]**

Report on Commission activities since last meeting on November 14, 2018.

Commissioner Hardeman stated that he attended the Peer Stress Unit meeting and he thought it was very well done and he was there for support and to listen. He also attended the groundbreaking of the new Ambulance Deployment Facility and he acknowledged the huge crowd that attended, including Mayor London Breed, whom you could tell deep down loves the Fire Department.

Commissioner Covington echoed Commissioner Hardeman's sentiments regarding the groundbreaking ceremony.

President Cleaveland stated that he attended a couple of meetings during the reporting period, including with the Director of the Bicycle Coalition to see how the Department can work more closely with the bike folks, and apparently, the Department has a good representative who is doing a very good job. He also met with President Sherman Tillman of the Black Firefighters Association to see how their organization is going and to get his input on our next chief. He also attended the groundbreaking as well and thinks it was a long time in coming. He added that there is a need to get voters to approve a bond to pay for a future training facility, which is going to be in excess of \$100,000,000.00.

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

Discussion regarding agenda for next and future Fire Commission meetings.

- Cancer Prevention Presentation
- Chief's public comment
- Done policy update
- Training facility update

Commissioner Covington stated that at the last meeting it was announced that there would be a discussion on the new training facility for this evening's meeting and then it was taken off calendar, and she thinks it should be on the calendar for the next meeting.

Vice President Nakajo confirmed that elections of officers will be held the first meeting in January, January 9, 2019.

**9. ADJOURNMENT** President Cleaveland adjourned the meeting at 6:56 p.m. in the memory of Michael Kirk.