

**FIRE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

**Wednesday, January 26, 2022 – 5:00 p.m.
This meeting was held remotely on WebEx**

The Video can be viewed by clicking this link:

https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=180&clip_id=40399

President Feinstein called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Commission President	Katherine Feinstein	Present
Vice President	Stephen Nakajo	Present
Commissioner	Francee Covington	Present
Commissioner	Ken Cleaveland	Present
Commissioner	Armie Morgan	Present
Chief of Department	Jeanine Nicholson	Present.
Robert Postel	Deputy Chief -- Operations	
Thomas O'Connor	Deputy Chief --Administration	
Sandy Tong	EMS	
David Brown	Airport Division	
Ken Cofflin	Bureau of Fire Prevention	
Shayne Kaialoa	Division of Training	
Ramon Serrano	Support Services	
Erica Arteseros	Homeland Security	
Natasha Parks	Health and Wellness	
Brice Peoples	Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	
Simon Pang	Community Paramedicine	
Staff		
Mark Corso	Deputy Director of Finance	

President Feinstein read the Ramaytush Ohlone Land Acknowledgement.

2. RESOLUTION 2022-02 [Discussion and possible action]

Resolution making findings to allow teleconferenced meetings under California Government Code Section 54953(e)

Commissioner Covington Moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Cleaveland Seconded. The motion was unanimous.

There was no public comment.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

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

Discussion and possible action to approve meeting minutes.

- Minutes from Regular Meeting on January 12, 2022.

Commissioner Covington Moved to approve the minutes and Commissioner Morgan Seconded. The motion was unanimous.

There was no public comment.

5. 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 January 12, 2022, including budget, academies, special events, communications, and outreach to other government agencies and the public.

Chief Nicholson reported on activities since the last meeting on January 12, 2022. She mentioned that Omicron has started to decline within the Department and 36 folks have caught Omicron in the last 10 days. She announced that Mayor Breed introduced a 14.7 million dollar supplemental to the Board of Supervisors so they can continue to provide essential city services and work to not just maintain but increase the staffing levels. She added that they have experienced a significant increase in the use of overtime pay due to staffing shortages. She stated that over the past week, they have conducted interview panels for the next H-2 academy which she hopes will start in May if the supplemental budget passes. She added that Chief Tong has also been conducting interviews for the next EMS H3 Level 2, paramedic class.

Vice President Nakajo acknowledged and appreciates the mayor's support as she understands the shortage that the Department has in terms of staffing.

Commissioner Cleaveland let the Chief know if she needed any assistance with conversations with the supervisors, the Commission would be happy to lend their support as best they can. He also acknowledged his appreciation with the leadership that the mayor has taken to backfill some of the needs of the Department.

President Feinstein also reminded the Chief that the commission is there to be advocates for the Department and that she has their support.

There as no public comment.

REPORT FROM ADMINISTRATION, DEPUTY CHIEF TOM O'CONNOR

Report on the Administrative Divisions, Fleet and Facility status and updates, Finance, including update on the Grants Committee, Support Services, and Training within the Department.

Chief O'Connor presented his December 2021 report. Chief O'Connor stated that Assistant Deputy Chief Kaialoa and the Division of Training has been very busy, and included the following training opportunities that were offered to the members: Public Information Officer class, controlling ignitable liquids and gasses, an instructor class, an engine boss class, a task force leader class, logistics section chief, wildland fire behavior, hazmat, rope rescue, personal radiation detector, disaster logistics, electrical and fuel cell

vehicle training and confined space rescue tech along with hosting the California Conference of Arson Investigators. He announced that the 128-academy class graduated with many starting their shifts on Christmas Eve. He mentioned that Chief Peoples had a recruit academy briefing, a finance meeting and he sat in on a creative development workgroup, did some outreach, recruitment, and development for his office's needs looking at grants as well as provided an update on the 9910 city EMT program. Chief O'Connor mentioned that NERT is still at limited capacity due to the pandemic. He touched on the Health, Safety and Wellness Division, the Physician's Office, the Investigative Services Bureau, Support Services. He concluded his report by reporting that rescue swimmers, Ryan O'Donnell, and Firefighter Tyler Kelly, along with Station 14 were given an award and honored for their daring rescue last year where they saved someone from the rocks below the Cliff House and that the Department partnered with the toy program and delivered over 200,000 toys to disadvantaged children through the Bay Area.

Commissioner Cleaveland confirmed that the 9910 Program is part of the City EMT program. Chief Peoples added that it is a developmental pipeline that the Department manages where they take graduates in from another program that deals with developing youths who might be at risk and helps them to get one of the minimum qualifications that are important to onboarding, which is the national registry EMT certificate.

Vice President Nakajo thanked Chief O'Connor for his comprehensive report. He acknowledged Chief Kaiialoa and all his training staff and getting the 128th academy class graduated and having them hit the ground running. He also confirmed that members who have tested positive for COVID are given 10 days off to isolate and may return after five days if they have no symptoms and they test negative with a rapid antigen test. He touched on the Staff Services Division and noted that there was extensive material outlined in the report and he commented on a few items such as the Focus Scope Program, ESER Bond 2020 updates, and CEQA process. He acknowledged Lt. Baxter for all his dedication and hard work as he goes back to the field.

Commissioner Covington thanked Chief O'Connor for his first report as Chief of Administration. She asked for clarification on the assessments that are being done with the 3,000 firefighters in maintaining their good health. Chief O'Connor answered that it was a study that was done about 12 years ago through Tony Stefani who started the Cancer Prevention Foundation where they sent out a survey to active and retired members and realized there was a problem with the survey as dead members don't return surveys. They were getting responses back from spouses or widows who had died saying the member died of cancer x number of years ago and while they were doing all this different research at UCSF regarding kidney and bladder cancer, they were approached by NIOSH who found out the work that was being done and they wanted to involve SFFD, Chicago and Philadelphia in a 50-year study covering 30,000 firefighters to see how firefighters were dying. They realized that perhaps one of the biggest problems they had was that the turnouts were becoming like sponges for toxins and all the chemicals they were facing in the fire environment, and they learned they needed to clean them all the time and detoxing firefighters right after the fire. He added the studies are continuing.

Commissioner Covington thanked Chief O'Connor for that summary and stated it's important that everyone know that the dangers that are faced by firefighters are not just fires and the ability to put out fires, but there is a great danger in ingesting all the off-gassing and all of the other things that come with property or cars being on fire. She thanked everyone in the Department who over the years have participated in the research and encouraged everyone to see a documentary called the Toxic Hot Seat. She also thanked the physician's office as they have a great sensibility for these kinds of things and made sure that the research included San Francisco Firefighters. Commissioner Covington confirmed that they boosted 250 members and the hope is everyone will be boosted by March 1, 2022, and she encouraged everyone to get it.

President Feinstein confirmed that the limit on the intoxicizers is .004 and that all tests during the reporting period were negative. Chief O'Connor confirmed that they also do drug and alcohol testing after an accident and there were four accidents during the reporting period, and all were negative. President Feinstein also confirmed that the turnout coats are lined with PFAS and the industry right now is gearing up to get out of the PFAS chemicals and there is evidence that PFAS is a carcinogenic chemical.

There was no public comment.

6. FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATING BUDGET – FISCAL YEARS 2022-2023/2023-2024 [Discussion]

Presentation from Mark Corso, Deputy Director of Finance and Planning on the Fire Department's operating budget for Commission review and discussion. Overview of City's budget process, Mayor's Office Budget Instructions, and Fire Department budget updates and priorities.

Mr. Corso provided the overall city budget process and instructions as well as some Department Specific information. His PowerPoint presentation is attached: <https://sf-fire.org/files/2022-01/Commission%20Presentation%20-%202022%2001%2026%20Budget%20Discussion%20updated.pdf>

He mentioned that after the approvals, budgets were loaded into the budget system, including any new initiatives that were approved, however, many uncertainties that have remained during the current fiscal year are mainly stemming from COVID, both operationally for departments, as well as economically for the city. He added that over the last two years, the city has had about a 108-million-dollar surplus, and generally, departments are requested to provide a reduction of 5 or 10 percent to their general fund commitments, and this year, that is not the case. He stated that departments are being emphasized to not request additional funds but to make use of existing budgets, find efficiencies, make modifications, but stay within their budgets for any of their proposals. He added that any initiatives or any changes should be aligned with mayoral priorities, which are outlined here restoring vibrancy in San Francisco, recovery of the local economy, and local businesses mainly as a result of COVID. Mr. Corso provided a brief update on the Grants Committee where they had their kickoff meeting in early December where they discussed how to better prepare and identify potential grant applications. He stated that if they identify a project specifically, the Grants Committee will allow them to

better seek out specific funding that may be tailored for funding a specific type of project and be able to give themselves as much time as possible to fully vet projected project proposals.

Commissioner Cleaveland thanked Mr. Corso for his excellent budget report and stated that he thinks the Department and certainly the Commission rely on him and is deeply indebted to him for keeping the Department on track in terms of the budget. He confirmed what the mandatory staffing levels are for the Fire Department which keeps all the engines and trucks and other apparatus open and staffed fully every day, which amounts to a little over 300 positions per day that they need to staff.

Commissioner Covington thanked Mr. Corso and noted that there are so many good things happening in terms of being able to garner the dollars and support they need and announced that the mayor was a Fire Commissioner and has a special place in her heart for the Fire Department and she thinks that her care and notice of the needs is reflected in the kind of financial support they can get. Commissioner Covington stated that the surplus of 108 million dollars is such good news and is music to her ears and she loves the sound of “no mandatory reductions are being requested”. She thanked Mr. Corso for his summary of the Gants Committee but would like his team to come before the commission and provide details regarding what grants have been applied for, what grants have come in, and where grants are most needed.

Vice President Nakajo stated how fortunate in terms of Mr. Corso's abilities and skill level that he presents to the department and how he can make something complex as a presentation of a departmental budget on such a high level so comprehensively and clearly to where the lay folks can understand it. He confirmed that the budget presented does not include the impacts of the EMS supplemental that will bring 50 additional employees into the budget, that they will be incorporating those additional FTEs into the budget by working with the mayor's office. Vice President Nakajo confirmed different budget items presented in the PowerPoint including that the continuing fund projects carry over from year to year.

There was no public comment.

7. FIRE COMMISSION ANNUAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE 2022 [Discussion and possible action]

Discussion and possible action to adopt the 2022 Annual Statement of Purpose.

President Feinstein Moved to approve the 2022 Statement of Purpose. Commissioner Cleaveland Seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

There was no public comment.

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

Discussion regarding agenda for next and future Fire Commission meetings.

Vice President Nakajo congratulated Commissioner Covington on her reappointment of 4 years to the Fire Commission.

- Budget – Action Item
- Grants applied for and received
- GOTC
- Homeland Security Overview

There was no public comment.

9. ADJOURNMENT President Feinstein adjourned the meeting in the memory of Firefighter/Inspector Larry Dean and the three Baltimore Firefighters, Lt. Paul Butrim, Firefighter/Paramedic Kelsey Sadler, and EMT/Firefighter Kenny Lacayo at 7:04 p.m.