Minutes of Regular Public Meeting  
Honolulu Fire Department Headquarters  
Honolulu Fire Department Auditorium  
Wednesday, April 20, 2022

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Nekota called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Charlotte Nekota, Max Hannemann, Dennis Morton, William Hong, Nicholas Teves, and David Matlin.

MEMBER EXCUSED: Craig Nagamine.

IN ATTENDANCE: Fire Chief Sheldon K. Hao (HFD), Deputy Fire Chief Jason Samala (HFD), Brian Ancheta (Department of the Corporation Counsel), and Nadine Murata.

II. PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON ALL AGENDA ITEMS.

Vice-Chair Hannemann asked the public if there was anyone who would like to testify. There were none.


Chair Nekota called for any comments or corrections to the minutes of March 16, 2022. Vice-Chair Hannemann moved and Commissioner Teves seconded. There being no further comments or corrections and with a unanimous vote in favor, the Commission approved the minutes.

Chair Nekota called for any comments or corrections to the executive session minutes of March 16, 2022. Commissioner Morton moved and Commissioner Teves seconded. There being no further comments or corrections and with a unanimous vote in favor, the Commission approved the minutes.

V. **REPORT OF THE FIRE CHIEF.** Fire Chief Hao passed out his monthly report and highlighted on the following:

A. **Major Incidents.**

Fire Chief Hao went over major incidents with the Commission. Details can be found in the monthly report.

1. **Fires.**

   Fire Chief Hao mentioned that there were 4 structure fires.

2. **Rescues.**

   Fire Chief Hao mentioned that there were 18 rescues.

   Fire Chief Hao mentioned possible upticks are due to spring break.

3. **Vacancies as of March 31, 2022.**

   Fire Chief Hao went over vacancies with the Commission and mentioned the department currently has 103 vacancies.

   Fire Chief Hao mentioned there is another recruit class that is scheduled to graduate on August 5, 2022.

   Fire Chief Hao mentioned that another recruit class is scheduled to start on July 11, 2022 and November 13, 2022.

   Fire Chief Hao went over the department’s recruitment and promotional timeline with the Commission.

   Fire Chief Hao discussed current and future meetings with the Department of Human Resources (DHR) regarding recruitment and its promotional process.

Chair Nekota asked how many retired last year.

Fire Chief Hao answered 59.
Fire Chief Hao mentioned negotiated contracts may effect on how many will retire.

Fire Chief Hao mentioned the department is seeing a trend on retirements, 25+ and up.

Vice-Chair Hannemann asked about exit interviews.

Fire Chief Hao answered it was conducted in the past.

Commissioner Morton asked about filling Assistant Chiefs and Battalion Chief positions.

Fire Chief Hao answered Battalion Chiefs are being promoted this Sunday.

Fire Chief Hao mentioned that applications for Assistant Chiefs went out and no one has applied.

Fire Chief Hao explained to the Commission that it has to do with pay.

Chair Nekota asked who’s in charge.

Fire Chief Hao answered the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and mentioned that he has been in constant contact with them.

Commissioner Morton asked about the 3rd rescue squad.

Fire Chief Hao answered not at this time and mentioned that the department will work with the positions and funding’s that it was given as the department will be taking a different approach.

Fire Chief Hao mentioned that the department will be taking 6 out of the 9 FFR 2 positions and add 1 person per truck.

Fire Chief Hao mentioned that he is hopeful that City Council will make its final approvals for its twin engine helicopters.

Fire Chief Hao explained to the Commission on how the department is looking at conducting its risk managements.

Commissioner Hong expressed his concerns regarding rescues and asked how the department is getting the word out.

Fire Chief Hao mentioned that the department’s media will be reaching out and state entities will also be putting out signage on trails.
Commissioner Matlin asked for clarification on Assistant Chiefs hires.

Fire Chief Hao explained that it depends on the pay package that is offered.

Fire Chief Hao explained to the Commission on what shredding is.

Commissioner Matlin asked if bringing shredding back would be the solution.

Fire Chief Hao answered, “Yes, it’s the solution”.

Chair Nekota asked if it’s the Mayor or City Council who ……..

Fire Chief Hao answered its DHR and it was under the direction of Carloe Kubo and mentioned that DHR wants to treat the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD), Honolulu Police Department (HPD) and the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA) the same.

Fire Chief Hao mentioned you cannot treat HFD the same due to the nature of the job.

Chair Nekota asked who the Director is now.

Fire Chief Hao answered Nola Miyasaki.

Chair Nekota suggested to the Commission that it send a letter in support of the shredding process.

Commissioner Matlin moved and Commissioner Teves seconded that the Commission send a support letter regarding HFD’s managerial staffing. There being no further comments and with a unanimous vote in favor, the Commission approved the letter.

Chair Nekota asked Fire Chief Hao to email the Commission’s secretary with information and what his timeline is.

Chair Nekota asked Commissioner Matlin to take charge.

4. Injuries.

Fire Chief Hao went over injuries and mentioned that it could be tied to rescues. Details can be found in the monthly report.

5. Grievances.

Fire Chief Hao went over grievances with the Commission.
Fire Chief Hao also reported on the following:

1. During the month of March, HFD received 2 complimentary correspondence and 1 complaint. Details can be found in the monthly report.

Commissioner Morton asked about EMT complaints.

Fire Chief Hao mentioned that it has 1 – 2 failures.

Chair Nekota asked if failures are because of physical.

Fire Chief Hao answered skills and academic.

Chair Nekota asked if recruits come from the Honolulu Community College.

Fire Chief Hao answered yes.

Fire Chief Hao mentioned a non-profit entity called the Papakulea Academy nka Fire Prep Academy is run by HFD retirees who help out local kids wanting to become fire fighters.

Chair Nekota asked if there were any questions. There was none.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENT: The next monthly Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. in the Honolulu Fire Department Auditorium.

VII. ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business, Vice-Chair Hannemann moved and Commissioner Morton seconded that the meeting be adjourned. By unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned on April 20, 2022 at 11:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Nadine Murata, Secretary.

APPROVED:

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CHARLOTTE NEKOTA, Chair