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STATE FIRE COUNCIL (SFC)
FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2020-2021 SECOND QUARTER MEETING MINUTES

Date and Time: November 25, 2020, 8:30 a.m.

Place: Meeting held by audioconferencing pursuant to Governor David Y. Ige's Emergency Proclamations, which can be found at <https://governor.hawaii.gov/category/covid-19/covid-19-emergency-proclamations/>, and Mayor Kirk Caldwell's Emergency Proclamations and Orders, which can be found at <https://www.honolulu.gov/mayor/proclamations-orders-and-rules.html>.

Present:

Manuel P. Neves	SFC Chair Fire Chief, Honolulu Fire Department (HFD)
Robert Perreira	SFC Member Acting Fire Chief, Hawaii County Fire Department (HCFD)
David Thyne	SFC Member Fire Chief, Maui Department of Fire and Public Safety (MFD), Maui County
Steven Goble	SFC Member Fire Chief, Kauai Fire Department (KFD)
Adam Rosenberg	Deputy Attorney General Department of the Attorney General State of Hawaii
Lloyd Rogers	SFC Administrative Specialist (AS) III
Gary Lum	SFC AS II
Carol Suzuki	SFC Secretary

I. Introduction

- A. Chair Neves called the meeting to order at 8:39 a.m.
- B. Chair Neves welcomed everyone, and the attendees introduced themselves. There were no public comments.
- C. Approval of the SFC FY 2020-2021 First Quarter Meeting Minutes

Motion: Member Thyne motioned to approve the SFC FY 2020-2021 First Quarter Meeting Minutes. Member Goble seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Record of Votes: Chair Neves - Aye
Member Thyne - Aye
Member Goble - Aye

D. Approval of Agenda

Chair Neves amended item IV on the agenda to read, "2021 Legislative Proposals."

Motion: Member Thyne motioned to approve the amended agenda. Member Goble seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Record of Votes: Chair Neves - Aye
Member Thyne - Aye
Member Goble - Aye

II. Member Reports on SFC County/State Issues

A. Member Goble, KFD

1. Grants

There were no new grants to report.

2. County Issues

- a. Dealing with the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) on Kauai is a unique situation with limited resources. Last night, the Mayor urged the Governor to reimplement the 14-day quarantine requirement for Kauai. The number of positive test results has dramatically increased since

the travel quarantine could be bypassed with a negative prearrival COVID-19 test result.

- b. The KFD's emergency call volume has been less, but is increasing since travel has increased. Common calls include inebriated people on the beach and dealing with more incidents due to the increased visitor population.
- c. The KFD hired Emergency Services Consulting International to evaluate the department, define service levels, and help strategically plan a solid foundation going forward. The department would like to focus on the basics and policy and procedures and are currently working on resource deployment. The KFD was previously subject to a performance audit before the county council and will probably receive criticism for excessive pension benefits.
- d. There has been no decrease in new construction projects on Kauai. Enforcing the fire code and plan review have been status quo.
- e. The KFD had nine retirements, and talks are ongoing with the county administration to fill vacant positions so that the needs of the community and funding balances are in order. It has been a challenge to deal with the extra scrutiny of the department and various budget pressures. The KFD has not been asked to decrease their budget, but is expecting tougher future times.
- f. Member Goble expressed his appreciation for the help with apparatus repair from the HFD's mechanics. Chair Neves mentioned that Dean DeMello, the HFD's Fire Equipment Superintendent, will be retiring this year and expects his successor will also be of help.
- g. Chair Neves asked about the overtime spiking issue in 2017 into 2018. A consultant was commissioned by the county council to conduct a performance audit that is being submitted to the council today. The KFD asked the consultant to separate the discretionary expenses and bargaining unit operational costs. The KFD used money for training with not much control and, as a result, senior fire fighters took more advantage of training opportunities than younger fire fighters (FF). The value of the ongoing workforce training can be seen in training programs that reach younger children, such as teaching them about exit planning, ocean safety, etc. Chair Neves requested to view the report when it becomes public record, as

Honolulu has similar challenges, primarily on premium pay, overtime, and nonbase pay.

3. Other Matters

Member Goble shared somber news of the passing of one of their FFs who had been battling brain cancer for several months. He succumbed to his illness a week ago last Friday. All Chiefs conveyed their heartfelt condolences, prayers, and assistance to the KFD family and the FF's family, as FFs are closely connected and many from the other counties may have known him.

AS Rogers stated that a few years ago, the Hawaii State legislature passed a bill to allow fire fighters who suffered from any one of the 20 different types of cancers to file a workers' compensation claim as a work-related illness. He will send information to Member Goble, so that the family and other members can file a claim.

B. Member Thyne, MFD

1. Grants

- a. After last year's wildland fires on Maui, the MFD established a nonprofit organization, the Maui Fire Fighters Foundation, and with the money donated by a generous donor, will purchase a high-pressure pump for a hose mule; a pump for a pickup truck; a trailer; and hoses collectively valued at \$53,475.16.
- b. The MFD applied for a Federal Emergency Management Agency's Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant (AFG) to purchase medical personal protective equipment.
- c. The MFD will apply for a Hawaii Emergency Management Agency grant which provides a 75% reimbursement of COVID-19-related items.
- d. The MFD applied for a Community Development Block Grant to purchase a mini-7 pumper for the Hana Fire Station worth \$267,800. This will replace a two-way vehicle.
- e. The MFD applied for a Fire Management Assistance grant for the reimbursement of expenses during Hurricane Lane and the Kahana Ridge fire.

2. County Issues

- a. FY 2020 apparatuses for the Wailuku and Lahaina Fire Stations have completed their preconstruction meetings. All vehicles being replaced have 10 to 15 years of frontline use.
- b. FY 2021 apparatuses include an engine for the Paia Fire Station, a utility truck for the Kaunakakai Fire Station, and a pick-up truck for the Battalion 1 Chiefs. The MFD found that pickup trucks are more useful than sport utility vehicles (SUV).

3. Other Matters

- a. The 36th Fire Fighter Recruit (FFR) class is currently in session and consists of 15 county and four state FFs. The class is expected to graduate on December 18, 2020. One state FFR failed and was released. A graduation ceremony is being planned at a facility that can provide for social distancing. Chief Perreira shared his experience with the HCFD's graduation, which was a one-on-one ceremony that went well until it was over. The graduates and their families began congregating in the parking lot, which they were not able to control. It presented a bad example to the community by disregarding safety. He recommended parking lot personnel as a prevention method.
- b. Promotion of Fire Captains and FFs are in the initial stages with processing and interviews to be conducted in December/January.
- c. The MFD's reorganization proposal was approved by the Administration. Human resources and accounting responsibilities are to be revised to reflect actual position responsibilities.
- d. Member Thyne congratulated Chair Neves on representing the HFD well at the Honolulu City Council meeting last week. He tuned in to Olelo and thought Chair Neves was well-prepared. Chair Neves thanked Member Thyne for his comments about the budget hearing and stated we can always get better, as we have so many moving parts.
- e. The MFD is anticipating five Captains and one FF to retire by the end of the year.
- f. Chair Neves requested the matrix used by the MFD for vehicle replacements. Besides age and miles, the condition of the vehicle is

important because it may be only two miles to an incident, but the engine may be pumping for two hours to fight a fire. Member Thyne mentioned that it was Chief Neves who provided then MFD's Chief Codeiro a formula. When the MFD went through the audit, the independent auditor recommended to continue to replace apparatuses using the formula, so it became easier to regularly replace vehicles.

C. Member Perreira, HCFD

1. Grants

- a. The HCFD was awarded a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) wildland grant of \$50,000 to purchase wildland training and equipment.
- b. The HCFD was awarded an AFG grant of \$345,000.
- c. The HCFD received a West Hawaii Community Health Center grant of \$125,000 for community paramedicine and purchased an emergency medical services (EMS) SUV. The balance was rolled over to FY 2021 due to COVID-19 and the inability to attend training opportunities.
- d. The HCFD is expecting two wildland tanker apparatuses from a private donor in January 2021. One apparatus is from Boise Mechanical Equipment valued at \$400,000 and the other is from Textron Systems/Howe Industries valued at \$500,000.
- e. The Daniel R. Sayre Memorial Foundation accepted 13 HI Stem Group ultraviolet irradiators to disinfect N-95 masks.
- f. The HCFD is applying for a USDA grant to purchase equipment for the Pahala Fire Station and other surrounding fire stations.
- g. Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding was used to purchase COVID-19-related equipment and fund salaries for emergency response.

2. County Issues

- a. The HCFD's FY 2021 budget was reduced with no supplemental approvals by the county council resulting in shortfalls. CARES Act funding is being used to meet some of the shortfalls.

- b. Hawaii County's COVID-19 response mitigation continues with the Fire Prevention Bureau leading the Prevention and Education Task Force. The HCFD is assisting with testing plans and sites.
- c. Hawaii County Mayor-elect Mitch Roth will assume office on December 7, 2020.

3. Other Matters

- a. The 49th FFR class was sworn in on October 23, 2020, with 17 new candidates.
- b. The new Fire Radio Dispatchers began on September 1, 2020, are progressing through training.
- c. Fire Chief Darren Rosario retired on November 1, 2020. He served the HCFD and the SFC well. Deputy Fire Chief Robert Perreira is the Acting Fire Chief until the fire commission appoints the new Fire Chief. Open recruitment closed on August 7, 2020, and the five candidates were announced on November 6, 2020.
- d. The state EMS budget has been 99% finalized and appears to include a five percent reduction.

D. Chair Neves, HFD

1. Grants

Chair Neves distributed his grant report which was made part of the minutes.

2. County Issues

- a. Training activities at the Charles H. Thurston Fire Training Center are on hold, but individual company training continues.
- b. The HFD received 4 apparatuses and 11 SUVs. Seven apparatuses from KME were under construction and are on hold. Solicitation continues for two apparatuses and two SUVs.
- c. The Waialua, Pearl City, and Wailupe Fire Stations have been relocated due to construction, and future builds are being planned for the Kaneohe and Manoa Fire Stations.

- d. The HFD's FY 2021 budget was reduced by 10%. Development of the FY 2022 budget is progressing in compliance with City and County of Honolulu (City) guidelines. The City is anticipating a \$400 million shortfall for FY 2021.

3. Other Matters

- a. The 108TH FFR Class began in June 2020 and is projected to graduate in January 2021. The 109th FFR class, which is comprised of FFR Is, started in October 2020 and will graduate in June 2021. In February 2021, 24 FFR IIs will begin FFR training. This is the second class of FFRs who have obtained certain levels of state certifications, which will reduce the classroom time for FFRs. The HFD isolates FFRs on campus to minimize the spread of COVID-19.
- b. As of October 31, 2020, there are 49 vacancies, including the loss of 23 personnel, due to retirements and separations. The HFD loses about 30 to 40 employees per year. By the end of 2020, the HFD will lose an additional 22 personnel, including 4 Battalion Chiefs and 15 Captains. Honolulu has much talent and will be able to fill the shoes of those who leave the HFD. A new promotion program started a couple of years ago to change the policy and procedures. Interviews are now conducted, so the established list can last the entire year. Projected vacancies are determined, and the HFD interviews a sufficient number of candidates to fill vacancies as they become available. Therefore, when seven vacancies for Captains become available, names can be obtained from the list to fill those vacant positions. This streamlined process is more efficient and quicker, and no one will have to wait before being promoted.
- c. The COVID-19 policy only applies to first responders and lifeguards. If the employee travels for personal reasons, even if the employee has proof of a 72-hour negative test, the Mayor's directive requires the employee to quarantine an additional four days on their own time, retest, and if the test is negative, they may return to work. This applies only to first responders who are assigned to a fire station and not dispatch, training, or headquarters personnel. The HFD has had zero positive cases in isolation. The HFD had a near miss when a pretravel test was positive and fellow workers were quarantined. When the employee retested, the result was a false positive.

- d. There were 27 positive tests since March 2020 with an initial cluster of cases then ones or twos thereafter. All cases were based on living and working conditions due to personal social interactions, but no incidents were recorded from on-duty response to emergency incidents. Personnel are doing a good job in protecting themselves when responding to incidents.
- e. The HFD expended 19,000 surge testing man hours in 26 days. The Mayor retained 20,000 test kits, and the second surge testing was held with the HFD assisting the City's EMS. Testing was held six days a week at four test sites. Fourteen thousand tests were conducted with 60,000 during the first surge testing and 20,000 more tests during the second surge testing for a total of 80,000 total tests performed on Oahu. The HFD is bracing themselves for vaccine distribution and awaiting what it will be tasked with.
- f. Of the initial \$14.5 million in CARES funding allotted to the HFD, the City retracted \$6 million which left \$8.5 million. To date, the HFD spent \$7.6 million to purchase 11 rapid response vehicles, 13 extractors, and pumpers that are on order. With a balance of \$900,000, \$400,000 was approved to purchase identified items. The HFD submitted \$36,000 in expenses and will leave some money in reserve.
- g. Chair Neves said his approach to obtain frontline personnel vaccinated will be on a voluntary basis, as not enough is known at this time on whether or not personnel should use sick leave if they have a side effect. It will be a state program, and it is not known to what degree the HFD is expected to participate. Chair Neves' initial thoughts were that first responders should not be vaccinated first. If the HFD is asked to assist in distributing the vaccines, this will have a huge impact on operations, as a total of 26 days of testing using 19,000 man hours were previously used. There is also a need to store vaccines in freezer containers at a low temperature. In anticipation, Chair Neves stated three special containers were purchased and are expected to arrive in December. He will share information as he receives it and be in contact with all counties.

Member Perreira stated that vaccinations will probably not be given at their fire stations. Similar to taking a flu shot, personnel will be vaccinated on their own so the department will not be liable for side effects and do not need to grant time off for the shot. Some mobile testing vans can do a 24- to 48-hour turn-around time for COVID-19 testing results. He reached out to the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association

who said as long as it is voluntary, they will be agreeable. The PCR test is more accurate, and the statin test is a surveillance test. There will be no pressure for anyone to take tests.

III. SFC Quarterly Update

A. Status of the State Fire Code

A discussion ensued on the amendment revisions to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1 Fire Code, 2018 Edition.

AS Lum reported that some of the 33 inspection forms used by individuals and companies who inspect and document their work were revised to avoid duplicating fire inspection certificate of fitness procedures and add the overall status of satisfactory or not satisfactory. Forms were uploaded on SFC and State Building Code Council (SBCC) websites for review and comment.

AS Rogers shared that the State Fire Code requires the review and approval by the Subcommittee of Building Officials (SBO) who represent the four county building officials and are voting members of the SBCC. There must be a unanimous agreement with any state code amendment by the SBO before the code can proceed to the SBCC's 11 voting members for final approval. If the State Fire Code is approved, each county can proceed to adopt the State Fire Code as their county fire code with county amendments. The SFC is very close to obtaining approval of the State Fire Code by the SBO and the SBCC. The 2021 NFPA 1 Fire Code will be published shortly, and the approval process will restart.

B. SBCC

1. On November 10, 2020, the SBO approved the amendment packages to the International Building Code (IBC), the International Residential Code (IRC), and the International Existing Building Code (IEBC). The SBCC approved the IRC and the IEBC on November 17, 2020, but the IBC was not distributed in time for a review and will possibly be approved at the December meeting. The approved codes can proceed to each county for adoption as their county codes through their ordinance process.
2. Interest and attendance at SBCC meetings have increased dramatically over the past year. Perhaps because it is easy to participate in meetings online and factory-built housing (FBH) is being mentioned by traditional builders and trades unions. This type of construction offers advantages in quality controls regulated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban

Development and lower costs. Houses are assembled in a factory, shipped intact, and delivered to the site where it is secured and utility services connected. The main objection from the trade unions is that FBHs do not have the same inspection process at every phase of construction like traditional housing. Unions want FBHs to be permitted and inspected by county inspectors the same way on-site houses are inspected and are opposing any unfair advantages the codes might allow. FBH information was provided to the members.

3. Member Perreira asked if a bill is being considered for statewide approval of FBH provisions and terminology. The SFC does not know of any such bill. He also shared that proponents of FBH in Hawaii County are willing to allow compliance inspection by county inspectors as each one is being built.

C. State Training and Education

FY 2021 Two-Day Off-Campus Classes

Nine classes were selected by the four county fire departments, but the first class was cancelled. The eight remaining classes are still scheduled to be delivered.

D. Reduced Ignition Propensity Cigarette (RIPC) Program

1. Inspections were curtailed in the last two months of FY 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions.
2. Additional testing of all brand/style cigarettes that failed initial independent RIPC testing in FY 2020 were completed. A comprehensive listing of all RIPC brand/style cigarettes currently approved for sale in Hawaii can be found in the SFC section of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations website.
3. Approximately 600 out of 656 (91.5%) Oahu retail outlets selling cigarettes were inspected in FY 2020. The remaining stores were closed, no longer selling cigarettes, or not in business. Oahu inspections will resume again in the 3rd Quarter of FY 2021. Inspections were conducted on Hawaii and Molokai, but were suspended in the second half of FY 2020 due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Instead, informational brochures were mailed to cigarette retailers on Maui, Hawaii, and Kauai.

4. Below is a summary of revenues and expenditures for the RIPC Special Fund:

Total Beginning Balance	\$713,502.59
Revenues	\$109,112.54
RIPC FY 2019 Allotment Carryover	\$ 17,904.83
Service Fees to the City (Salaries, Testing Expenses)	\$150,000.00
Other Expenses (Supplies, Postage, Printing, Travel, Rental, Cigarettes, Fees, and Miscellaneous)	\$ 22,893.34
Total RIPC Special Fund Ending Balance	\$649,721.79

RIPC Special Fund FY21 (As of September 30, 2020)

Total Beginning Balance	\$649,721.79
Revenues	\$ 31,125.00
Service Fees to the City (Salaries, Testing Expenses)	\$ 37,500.00
Other Expenses (Supplies, Postage, Printing, Travel, Rental, Cigarettes, Fees, and Miscellaneous)	\$ 365.52
City Expenditures	\$ 11,059.22
City Balance	\$ 26,440.78
RIPC Special Fund Balance	\$619,854.87

E. Fire Protection Systems Administrative Rules

SFC staff fielded several questions on the administrative rules. To date, 126 applications were submitted and 107 were recommended for approval to the appropriate county fire departments. The SFC is communicating with the county Fire Prevention Bureaus on implementation and approval procedures. Counties must also incorporate license fees in their respective county fire codes.

F. Grant Working Group

County	Name	email
Maui	Captain Reza Azman	reza.azman@mauicounty.gov
Maui	Assistant Chief Michael Werner	michael.werner@mauicounty.gov
Hawaii	Deputy Chief Robert Perreira	robert.perreira@hawaiicounty.gov
Kauai	Devin Medeiros	dmedeiros@kauai.gov
Honolulu	Battalion Chief Kevin Mokulehua	kmokulehua@honolulu.gov
Honolulu	Grant Manager Michele Haruno	mharuno@honolulu.gov

G. Youth Fire Prevention and Intervention Program

Youth Fire Information Repository and Evaluation System (YFIRES)
 Information on the YFIRES was reviewed. Youth fire setting information should be compiled in a database to be utilized for future strategies on addressing prevention and intervention efforts. Although each county's fire prevention personnel have had training in counseling, only Honolulu seems to have identified referral cases. The YFIRES has a program database that several fire departments are using throughout the nation. Once there are enough cases, an analytical report can be prepared. Chair Neves stated his concern is with maintaining the confidentiality of the individuals in the program. AS Rogers stated he will schedule a meeting with the HFD Program Manager to discuss these concerns with Chair Neves, and the issue will be revisited at the next SFC meeting.

IV. 2021 Legislative Bill Proposals

AS Lum reviewed the following proposed bills, which were introduced last session, but COVID-19 restrictions suspended the session:

- A. Allowing RIPC funding to be used for statewide fire prevention and education efforts
- B. Allowing emergency medical technicians (EMT) certified by the National Registry of EMTs to qualify to perform emergency medical services in the state
- C. Requiring sellers of residential property to provide working smoke alarms for the new owner
- D. Requiring general contractors to provide a cost estimate for a residential fire sprinkler system to a potential home buyer

- E. Allowing dependents of FFs who die in the line of duty a tuition waiver from an state university or college
- F. Implementing a state tax credit for owners who install automatic fire sprinklers in dwellings
- G. Repeal the county prohibition on requiring fire sprinklers for one- and two-family dwellings
- H. Eliminating the use of consumer fireworks on the three designated holidays

Members discussed the various bills, but were primarily concerned with the benefits the EMT bill would provide the community.

V. Unfinished Business

A. NFPA Codes and Standards Update

There was no update to report.

B. Conferences and Meetings

Conferences scheduled for 2021 were reviewed. It was agreed that counties have suspended travel to out-of-state locations, except to inspect newly built fire apparatuses.

C. Other Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business to report.

VI. New Business

A. Request from Kamehameha Schools (KS) for Live Incident Data Feed

AS Lum stated that Kamehameha Schools requested each county fire department to provide a live data feed so they can monitor whether any of their properties are involved in a fire incident on a live real-time basis. KS owns properties on every island except Lanai.

He explained that Honolulu's live geographic information system feed is from the computer-aided dispatch system, which is only available internally in the City. To make this available externally would require information technology intervention. A discussion followed regarding concerns with additional costs

in time and resources to make this information available and whether or not other private entities who may want the same information and the permissions needed to authorize this distribution would be accommodated. It was unanimously agreed to deny KS or any other entity access to this information.

B. National Association of State Fire Marshal's (NASFM) Virtual Meeting

1. AS Lum attended the abovementioned meeting on November 19, 2020, and stated that, through a fire incident data analysis, it was discovered that a significant percentage of fire fatalities were occurring involving home oxygen use. Several fires occurred with patients who smoked while using oxygen. The Wyoming State Fire Marshal's office applied and received a grant to develop and distribute a device to shut off the oxygen flow when ignition of the tubing was encountered. A patented valve was developed and placed in two locations, one near the patient and the other near the supply. The cost of the valve is \$10. It was recommended that states work to require oxygen manufacturers and distributors to provide these valves as a community risk reduction effort to save lives.
2. There was a discussion on fire inspections of health care facilities that provide Medicare and Medicaid services. With the risk of COVID-19 exposure from patients, other State Fire Marshals who modified their inspection procedures, including virtual fire inspections, should share their procedures with other departments. The International Code Council will publish a white paper on virtual inspections that will be discussed at their next meeting in December.
3. Another discussion brought awareness to temporary or modular structures being erected in parking lots as COVID-19 vaccination centers without building or fire code permits or inspections. Also, in response to restrictions on indoor dining, restaurants were opening outdoor seating areas to provide appropriate social distancing without being building or fire-code compliant.
4. A discussion occurred to support FFs, paramedics, and hospital staff to receive the first series of COVID-19 vaccinations. NASFM plans to generate correspondence to state decision makers to support this.

- #### C. Members discussed the upcoming replacements for Fire Prevention Committee members due to retirements or promotions. Also, an election of the SFC Vice Chair will be placed on next meeting's agenda due to the retirement of Fire Chief Rosario. The HCFD is currently in the process of selecting a new Fire Chief.

The SFC must have a quorum in order to pick a Vice Chair.

VII. Next Quarterly Meeting

The next meeting will be planned for early March 2021. If travel resumes, the meeting will be on Maui.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.



MANUEL P. NEVES
Chair