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**DRAFT**

STATE FIRE COUNCIL (SFC)  
FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2024-2025 FIRST QUARTER MEETING MINUTES

Date and Time: August 12, 2024, 1:00 p.m.

Place: Meeting held in person and via audioconferencing pursuant to HRS § 92-3.7. Remote meeting by interactive conference technology; notice; quorum. Effective: January 1, 2022

Present:

Kazuo Todd	SFC Chair and Fire Chief of the Hawaii County Fire Department (HCFD), Hawaii County
Sheldon Hao	SFC Vice Chair and Fire Chief of the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) City and County of Honolulu
Bradford Ventura	SFC Member and Fire Chief of the Maui Department of Fire and Public Safety (MFD), Maui County
Michael Gibson	SFC Member and Fire Chief of the Kauai Fire Department (KFD), Kauai County
Martinez Jacobs	SFC Member and Airports Fire Chief Airports Division, Transportation Department (ARFF) State of Hawaii
Michael Walker	SFC Member and Fire Protection Forester Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) State of Hawaii
Dale Fujimoto	Deputy Attorney General (AG) Department of the Attorney General, State of Hawaii

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Gary Lum	SFC Administrative Specialist III (AS)
Socrates Bratakos	SFC Administrative Specialist II
Michael O’Sullivan	Reduced Ignition Propensity Cigarette (RIPC) Administrator
Carol Suzuki	SFC Secretary

Guests:

Daniel Hoopii	Battalion Chief, HCFD
Gary Honold	Regional Director, Northwest Division National Fire Protection Association
David Rodriguez	Equal Opportunity Officer Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) State of Hawaii
Jared Redulla	Deputy Director Department of Law Enforcement (DLE)
Roy Nakama	DLE
Michael Wong	DLE
Elizabeth Pickett	Co-Executive Director Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization
Craig Uchimura	Assistant Chief, Honolulu Fire Department (HFD)
Pao-Chi Hwang	Battalion Chief, Fire Prevention Bureau, HFD
Dyron Ota	Captain, Fire Prevention Bureau, HFD
Ted Muraoka	Firefighter III, Fire Prevention Bureau, HFD
Ashley Mizuo	Hawaii Public Radio (joined at 1:20 p.m.)
	KHON representative (given opportunity to identify self; no reply)

I. Introduction

A. Call to Order at 1:00 p.m.

B. Introduction of Attendees and Public Comments

Attendees introduced themselves; there were no public comments.

C. Approval of the SFC FY 2024 4<sup>th</sup> quarter meeting minutes of June 27, 2024. All members voted in favor of accepting the minutes as written.

D. Approval of Agenda

It was suggested that agenda item "A. Statewide fireworks permit database" under III. New Business, be moved to the beginning of the meeting to accommodate guests from the Department of Law Enforcement and HFD Fire Prevention Bureau.

Correction to the date in Item 1.C. from July 27, 2024 to June 27, 2024.

All members voted in favor to approve and accept the agenda as amended.

II. Old Business

A. Governor's proclamation relating to housing

AS Lum spoke with staff in the Governor's office and was told that the intent is to extend the suspension of the State Building Code Council's ability to amend or update the state building codes to the end of the year. The current Governor's Emergency Proclamation Relating to Housing prevails.

B. Act 209 requirements for SFC:

1. Appoint State Fire Marshal (SFM) for a term of five years. A draft of the position description was provided. All county fire chiefs were given an opportunity to review and edit the draft at this meeting. Members discussed wording of the draft document.

In position description, under Section A. Resource Management and Reporting to delete the word "structural" and add word "may assist" in disbursement of federal grants; Section C. Education, "significant relevant experience," discussed whether or not to require specific years of experience.

Chair would like SFC to agree on draft version that can be submitted to DLIR, who will be making the final position description decisions.

**Motion:** To accept document as is with the changes as discussed to Section A. Motion passed unanimously.

To be determined is whether the position will have administrative and/or responder responsibilities.

Liz suggested adding important partners who may be non-government organizations under (c)(1) of the position description (PD). Chair Todd clarified that under (c)(1) local agencies that include government and other organizations on the local level for the state have been covered. Can add, "Coordinate with local agencies for the state."

2. Establish the terms of employment for the position of the SFM.

General discussion on this topic.

3. Submit a report to the Legislature by 11/1/2024, which shall include (at minimum):
  - a. An organizational plan, including structure and personnel plan for the office of the SFM.

**Motion:** To reopen the SFM position description to further discuss Act 209, item 3.a. "An organizational plan, including structure and personnel plan for the office of the SFM." Further amend the PD.

SFC members voted unanimously in favor to reopen discussion on the SFM position.

It was clarified that DLIR provides functional statement and placement of position on their organizational chart.

- b. Description of the roles and divisions of responsibilities between the State and the counties, and the office of the SFM and the SFC, regarding fire prevention and response.
- c. Proposed operating budget for the office of the SFM.
- d. Refer to draft Position Description

**Motion:** To accept SFM position description as written with language in Section 3.A.1 to mirror language from Act 209. "Coordinate efforts between local agencies or the state"

All members voted in favor to accept submitting the PD to DLIR.

C. State amendments to the National Fire Protection Association 1 Fire Code, 2024 Edition

1. State Fire Code Investigative Committee. Honold needs names from counties so that he can set up zoom meetings. Chiefs updated the Fire Prevention Committee contact list information at this meeting. AS Lum will send the updated contact list to Honold.
2. Amendment package deadline September 2025; refer to §107-24 (c). If not adopted by then, National code becomes default state code with no amendments. Submission needs to be 3 to 4 months before September in order to allow the State Building Code Council (SBCC) to approve and adopt and meet the deadline.

D. Ethics Training for Board Members

AS Lum records show that all have completed the training. Lum will forward Chief Jacobs record of completion.

III. New Business

A. Statewide fireworks permit database.

Deputy Director Redulla explained how the Department of Law Enforcement is the coordinating agency for the state fireworks task force. Thousands of pounds of fireworks have been seized from houses and delivery services. Difficulty is being experienced at ports and routes of entry. When shippers notify DLE, embargo of cargo is based on the expense to a store it in a secure location; it is a complex operation. The manifest info is used to check who is potentially involved and information is checked for permits. DLE is able to identify persons involved, but experience timeliness issues when there is a need to contact counties to check for permitted importers. DLE proposes to develop a SharePoint database listing legally permitted importers so that when there is a shipment, the appropriate person can be contacted immediately. County fire chiefs were supportive of this coordinated effort to maintain a database of importers permitted to import fireworks.

DLE and Chief Uchimura will work with counties to standardize the fireworks licensing and permitting process to include how firework fees are collected.

B. SFC FY2024 report

1. SFC

Training from the National Fire Academy. SFC staff will be sending the class listing to counties to register for the next six months of classes.

SFC staff reviewed 110 applications and approved 109 certificates of fitness for inspectors of sprinklers, fire extinguishers, alarm systems, etc. Certifications are valid across the state.

State Fire Prevention Working Group. Summary of bills that were approved from the past legislation session.

Fire Fighter's Safety Guide. SFC funded the Olelo Hawaiian language version of the guide for students and will fund the printing cost again this year.

Financial Report. With the Governor's 10% restriction on the budget, \$95,400 of the \$106,000 budgeted was allocated for the SFC.

2. Reduced Ignition Propensity Cigarette (RIPC) Program

O'Sullivan reported on the highlights in the RIPC Program. Incumbent Earle Kealoha retired at the end of 2023. O'Sullivan started January 2024 and has been managing funds and performing inspections. There are 675 brands/styles and income from the certification of cigarettes, fully funds the RIPC. Manufacturers certify that their cigarettes are RIPC compliant on a three-year cycle. On average, 175 certifications are received for an estimated \$253K+; program is self-sustaining.

O'Sullivan will be studying the trends. Since RIPC started in 2015, an average of \$160K/fiscal year has been expended for travel for inspections and testing cost. Brands tested per year is the biggest and adjustable expense. Although the current surplus is large, funding is slowly being depleted based on the projected income. If funds reach \$500K to 400K, there may be some concerns. Ideally would like to test all brands/styles once per three-year cycle, but not feasible. O'Sullivan is working off a list of retailers who sell cigarettes, provided by the State tax office.

C. SFC will submit 2025 Legislative bills as follows, due by September 30, 2024 to DLIR:

1. Request to use excess RIPC funds for SFC programs. Revise 132C and submit.
2. Restrict consumer use of fireworks. Debating on reintroducing in 2025 Session or not. For political reasons may not pass, but potential harm exists so Chair Todd recommends SFC submits the proposed legislation.
2. Discussed repeal of Section 46-19.8, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, to allow the counties to determine the proper requirements for fire sprinkler systems in

new one-and-two family residences. Chair Todd recommends rewording and submitting the proposed legislation again.

**Motion:** Propose that the previous three existing bills from previous years be revised and resubmitted.

All members voted in favor to resubmit proposed bills as written above.

#### C. Fire Prevention Week 2024

Honold offered to send "fire prevention week in a box" supplies to assist in promoting fire prevention week in the community. Box includes banners, activity booklets, posters, brochures, stickers, magnets, bags, etc. AS Lum will send Honold a list of contacts from each county to send it to.

A request was sent to the Governor's office for a presentation ceremony for Fire Prevention Week. Chair Todd will follow up with the Governor's office for a proclamation signing ceremony date.

#### D. Deputy Attorney General for SFC

Adam Rosenberg is no longer assigned to SFC. Dale Fujimoto is currently assigned to SFC.

#### IV. Next Quarterly Meeting

The second quarterly meeting for fiscal year 2025 is tentatively scheduled for October 3, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. Members plan on attending the Fire Prevention Week proclamation signing at the Governor's office and/or may arrive early to discuss non-SFC fire department matters.

#### V. Adjournment

Hearing no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Todd at 3:20 p.m.