

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS**

**MINUTES
TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2006**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners convened Tuesday, January 17, 2006 at 3:06 p.m. in the Fire Commission Meeting Room, City Hall East, 200 N. Main Street, Los Angeles.

Present: President Dalila Sotelo, Vice President Jill Furillo, Commissioners Andrew Friedman, Genethia Hudley-Hayes and Casimiro U. Tolentino. Fire Chief William Bamattre and Deputy City Attorney Janet Jackson.

The flag salute was followed by a moment of silence in honor of past and present members of the Los Angeles City Fire Department who devote their lives to the protection of our community.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- A. Regular Meeting of November 1, 2005
- B. Regular Meeting of November 15, 2005

ACTION: The minutes of November 1 and November 15, 2005 were unanimously approved as submitted (Furillo/Tolentino)

3. COMMISSION BUSINESS

- A. Activities/Events/Meetings

President Sotelo indicated that she would be attending the FS 4 groundbreaking ceremony on January 19th. Commissioner Friedman indicated that he would also attend the event.

- B. Request for future Agenda items

None.

- C. Board of Fire Commissioners' Committees – Status Reports:

President Sotelo provided an overview on the Board's decision to activate the Fire Commission Committees.

AGENDA
Board of Fire Commissioners

January 17, 2006

1. Brush Clearance Committee

President Sotelo indicated that the Brush Clearance Committee would remain inactive until such time that Fire Chief Bamattre forwards matters that require consideration by the Committee.

2. EMS Committee [Commissioners Furillo/~~Tolentino~~ Friedman]

Commissioner Friedman called for a correction of the Committee members listed on the Board's agenda. It was noted that he serves as Co-Chairman on the EMS Committee. Vice President Furillo reported that she had pre-meetings with Chief Bamattre, Chief Rueda, Dr. Eckstein, County EMS representatives, and union representatives for the purpose of gathering information and assessing Department related EMS issues. She indicated that the EMS Committee held its first meeting and they have begun to identify issues that impact various areas of the city and involve other entities and departments. Some issues include, homeless patients being discharged by hospitals and taken to a particular area of the city without follow up and the Department's plan to collect data relative to homeless transports. Commission Furillo reported that L.A. County EMS representatives were invited to participate in the Fire Commission's EMS meetings and would continue to work together to address EMS related issues of joint-interest.

Vice President Furillo also reported that she had conducted a 2-1/1 hour-walk-through of the skid row area with LAPD Captain Andy Smith. She personally witnessed three patients being dropped off by other cities--Long Beach and Santa Monica. One was a psychiatric patient who had not been issued medication; the Union Rescue Mission representatives were present and did follow up to retransfer the patient.

3. Human Relations Development Committee (HRDC)
[Commissioners Sotelo/~~Furillo~~ Hudley-Hayes]

President Sotelo noted that the HRDC Committee is Co-Chaired by Commissioner Hudley-Hayes. She said that the committee has had two meetings and its goal is to get a historical crash course on HRDC and the current status of those issues. She reported that the Committee is looking at the commitments made by the City and Fire Department ten years ago and determining what efforts were put in place to improve human relations within the diverse personnel grouping. She said that the next task for the Committee is to establish short-term goals.

4. Personnel/Employee Relations Committee
[Commissioners Tolentino/Hudley-Hayes]

Commissioner Tolentino reported that pre-committee meetings with Chiefs Fox and Mack were held to identify their respective areas of oversight. He said that the Committee would now begin to identify and address specific issues; notification of the first meeting would be sent out soon.

AGENDA
Board of Fire Commissioners

January 17, 2006

5. Technology Committee [Commissioners Hudley-Hayes/Tolentino]

Commissioners Hudley-Hayes reported that the Technology Committee had one pre-meeting and held its first Committee meeting with their Department advisory staff; the next meeting is January 27th. She said that the Department advisors would assist in determining the short and long-term goals and help to identify what the Committees' priorities will be. Commission Hudley-Hayes is scheduled to meet with Fire Chief Bamattre to obtain his input and to determine what work he sees the Committee undertaking. She thinks it is important for the Committees to work with Department personnel so that the work of the committees is a consensus of all.

It was reported that Commissioners Tolentino and Hudley-Hayes had an excellent walk-through of OCD where they experienced first-hand the importance and demands of the Department's technology. Commissioner Hudley-Hayes indicated that they sat with a dispatch operator to listen to incoming calls; they really got an understanding of how calls are processed and use of the software. It was noted that Commissioner Friedman also toured the OCD today. President Sotelo indicated that she had the opportunity to see the thermal imaging cameras that have been placed on some of the engines and suggested that the Technology Committee members may also be interested in looking at that technology.

4. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

A. Significant Incidents/Activities

Fire Chief Bamattre provided a summary report on the activities and events that the Department participated in since the last meeting. He also provided an overview of the major emergency incidents the Department responded to, including information on the start of the brush clearance and fuel management season. Chief Rueda provided an overview of the Department's weather deployment changes and related emergency incidents.

5. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Proposed Fire Department 2006-07 Budget – Letter to Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa dated January 6, 2006 regarding budget funding request and priorities. [BFC 05-102-S]

ACTION: Received and filed

AGENDA
Board of Fire Commissioners

January 17, 2006

6. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Fire Chief's transmittal dated December 20, 2005, submitting the Labor-Management Executive Committee, Board of Honorary Awards Sub-Committee's recommendation for issuance of the Medal of Valor Award to Captain II Robert L. McMaster and Apparatus Operator Jose A. Cardona in connection with the Palomar Hotel Fire on August 16, 2001. [BFC 05-105]

Recommendation: Approve the issuance of the Medal of Valor to Captain II Robert L. McMaster and Apparatus Operator Jose A. Cardona for their heroic performance at the Palomar Hotel Fire on August 16, 2001.

DISCUSSION: Fire Chief Bamattre provided an overview of the award process. He said that prior to this Board's appointment, there was an award process in place that needed to be revised, therefore, he established a labor-management committee to modify the process and said that the report would be submitted for the Board's information at the next meeting. He acknowledged Pat McOsker, Dick Markota Chiefs Tom Brennan and Barry for their participation and work in that committee. Chief Bamattre proceeded to provide an overview of the heroic actions of Captain II Robert L. McMaster and Apparatus Operator Jose A. Cardona which earned them the Medal of Valor Award. Commissioner Tolentino questioned why the awarding approval process took so long. Chief Bamattre responded that under the new process, the awarding should be complete within a 60-day period.

MOVED: Commissioner Friedman motioned for approval.

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Hudley-Hayes

AYES: 5

NAYS: 0

- B. Fire Chief's transmittal dated December 21, 2005, submitting a list of volunteer support organizations that provide assistance to the Fire Department. [BFC 05-106 - Friedman]

ACTION: Received and filed

- C. CF 04-1532 – Fire Department Report dated December 15, 2005 relative to the feasibility of allowing Hatzolah of Los Angeles to respond to Code 3 (lights and sirens) in appropriately marked, privately owned vehicles as part of a pilot program. [BFC 06-001 – Friedman]

AGENDA
Board of Fire Commissioners

January 17, 2006

DISCUSSION: Fire Chief Bamattre indicated that there had been an omission on the part of the Department in directing the report through the Board for review. He reported that the matter was originally addressed at the direction of a Council motion and that it has been ongoing matter at Council Committee. He said that Hatzolah who has had a long-term volunteer program/relationship with the Department in the area of EMT, initiated the request. He gave an overview of the Hatzolah's program, which he said, mainly serves the Orthodox Jewish community.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mr. Brenner Zvika commented that Hatzolah was present to address any questions that the Board may have. He said that Hatzolah was part of the task force; they participated at all three meetings to hash over concerns associated with their initial request and that all the concerns were address at the meetings. He indicated that they also had prepared a response to Chief Bamattre's letter and would provide a copy to the Board along with literature on the organization. In response to Commissioner Hudley-Hayes' inquiry, Mr. Zvika said that his organization provides basic life support within the scope of their expertise; that they are EMTs trained and certified by the EMS agency of the County Los Angeles Health Department. He indicated that they are equipment with basic life support equipment in their cars. Mr. Zvika said that when they respond to an emergency, they intervene if necessary, stabilize the person until the paramedics arrive and then transfer patient care, they however, stand by to help the paramedics if it is necessary. He said that it is not their intent to assume transport responsibility and he proceeded to compliment the services and community interaction provided by the Fire Department.

Rabbi Chaim Kolodny informed the Commissioners that every issue raised by the Code 3 Task Force was already responded to in the Hatzolah manual. He indicated that the Hatzolah of Los Angeles is comprised of volunteers and that the community has given thousand of hours to develop the program. He closed by indicated that they appreciate the opportunity for Hatzolah to have their voices heard.

Mr. Seth Gersten submitted a card on behalf of Hatzolah but did not speak. Mr. Pat McOsker, President, United Firefighters Los Angeles City (UFLAC) commented that he had spoken before the Transportation Committee of State Assembly on Monday and would reiterate those comments. He indicated that he had worked in Battalion 18 for seven years, with lots of overtime in FS 61 were most of Hatzolah's efforts are concentrated. He said that he had witnessed first hand the good work Hatzolah's does and appreciates them. UFLAC supports Hatzolah but has strong concerns with the red lights and sirens request and concurs with the Department's position on the issue. He said that the union supports and endorses the Fire Core program and would suggest that Hatzolah join the efforts of that program. Mr. McOsker said that he has not read the report as of yet and would provide additional input later.

AGENDA
Board of Fire Commissioners

January 17, 2006

DISCUSSION CONT'D: Fire Chief Bamattre provided an overview of the Fire Core program. The matter was opened for discussion and questions from the Board. Commissioner Friedman explained that the reason he had requested the matter be placed on the agenda was because the report had bypassed the Board. He said that during his confirmation process the Mayor, Councilmembers Garcetti and Labonge had indicated to him that an important issue that the Board would be considering would be the Hatozlah program, he therefore, thought that the Board should review the matter. Commissioner Friedman said that he is very interested in the issue and recommended that the matter be forwarded to the EMS Committee for further discussion and consideration of the Fire Chief's report. He said that then the EMS Committee could report back to the Board with its recommendations. The Board agreed that the issue is important and there are concerns that could better be addressed in detail by the Fire Commission EMS Committee.

ACTION: Report was forwarded to the EMS Committee for further consideration at their next meeting.

- D. Fire Chief's transmittal dated January 3, 2006, submitting the Topanga Brush Fire Deployment Report [BFC 06-002 – Sotelo/Hudley-Hayes]

DISCUSSION: Fire Chief Bamattre provided a summary of the Department's deployment strategies and mutual aid process as they relate to the incident. He indicated that all fire stations had resources but some did not have the fire resource component during the fire; he explained the process further and concluded by indicating that the Department's goal is to provide equitable service throughout the City at all times. President Sotelo recapped on the prior issues which the Board had requested information on and are still outstanding: the maximum deployment plan, budget and reimbursements, and employee work-related issues. Assistant Chief Tim Manning indicated that the report has been submitted to him for review and that it would be at the next meeting.

ACTION: Received and Filed.

7. CLOSED SESSION

The regular meeting recessed at 4:10 p.m. and President Sotelo announced that the Board would convene in closed session with its legal counsel pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(b) to discuss the following:

- A. Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release. Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b).

AGENDA
Board of Fire Commissioners

January 17, 2006

Deputy City Attorney Jackson called the regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners to order at 5:08 p.m. She indicated that pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(b) the Board of Fire Commissioners had met to discuss Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release and that no action was taken in closed session.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:09 p.m. (Friedman/Tolentino)

ATTEST BY:

DALILA T. SOTELO, President

BLANCA GOMEZ-REVELLES
Commission Executive Assistant II

Date: April 18, 2006

Note: Actions of the Board shall become final at the expiration of the next five meeting days of the City Council during which the Council has convened in regular session, unless the Council acts within that time by two-thirds vote to bring the action before it or to waive review of the action.