

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

**MINUTES  
TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2006 AT 3:00 P.M.**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners convened Tuesday, March 7, 2006 at 3:08 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.

**PRESENTATION** - The following Medal of Valor recipients were acknowledged for their heroic actions:

Robert L. McMaster, Captain, Fire Station 35, "A" Platoon  
Jose A. Cardona, Apparatus Operator, Fire Station 39, "A" Platoon  
Jody G. Garfield, Apparatus Operator, Fire Station 35, "A" Platoon  
Brian E. Stires, Firefighter III, Fire Station 89, "B" Platoon

**1. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Gary Mellinger commented that for many years there has been lack of compassion and arrogance within the Department, especially in the Chief's ranks. He indicated that the under rules of this Department, members are often retaliated against and intimidated. He commented that the Internal Affairs Division is not fair, just, nor managed appropriately. He remarked on racist comments that inbreed actions for others to follow. He said that the Department chiefs often command respect for their position rather than earn it. He remarked on management accountability and the need for the Commission to evaluate management's performance and make recommendations to the Mayor.

**2. COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**A. Activities/Events/Meetings**

President Sotelo announced that the Board would conduct a public hearing on March 21, 2006 at 3 p.m. to consider proposed annual cost of special services permit fee increases. Information is available at the Board Office.

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B. Request for future Agenda items

None.

C. Status report from the Board of Fire Commissioners Committees and further consideration of the Board of Fire Commissioners' Action Plan related to the following Fire Department audits:

- [BFC 06-006] - Correspondence dated January 26, 2006 from Laura Chick, City Controller, transmitting the Los Angeles City Controller's review of the Los Angeles Fire Department Management Practices by Sjoberg Evashenk Consulting, Inc.
- [BFC 06-014] - Correspondence dated January 31, 2006 from Margaret Whelan, General Manager, Personnel Department transmitting the Executive Summary of Fire Department Audit.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mrs. Chris Mattson commented that in addition to the defective discipline system that both audits revealed controversy over the proficiency of ladders. She said that the Controllers' audit contains a serious error in this regard and proceeded to read an excerpt of the audit, page 61, "one major change...program" She commented, that however, according to the recruit training academy policy and procedures manual that was issued to her son in 2004, a different standard is mandated and proceeded to read from the document. Mrs. Mattson commented that the standards are not being applied for recruits and remarked on the discrimination free workplace policy.

Ms. Alicia Mathis, LAFD Captain, articulated her vision of the department she would like to work for. She commented on the negative work environment aspects that firefighters encounter, performance abilities, retaliation from peers and supervisors, how the Departments needs to move towards success. Ms. Mathis also commented on leadership, accountability, discipline, hazing and harassment, and the need for a work environment that is safe.

DISCUSSION: President Sotelo indicated that there were two handouts provided for review; a combined audit recommendation matrix and the Fire Commission goals, objectives, and timeline for the action plan. She provided an overview of the process and the methodology to be used for the development of the Fire Commission audit plan. She expects to have a plan that will reflect the input from the Commission, Department, all employee associations, and stakeholders for adoption by the Commission on April 25<sup>th</sup>.

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Vice President Furillo indicated that she is working on two committees, the Joint Labor Management Committee and the Fire Commission EMS Committee. She reported that the Joint Labor Management Committee is moving forward with discussion on their assigned items; the work is on-going and moving forward to meet the deadline. Vice President Furillo reported that the EMS Committee had preliminary discussion to consider the recruitment issues. She said that the Committee has considered suggestions from the various stakeholders and that the Department is also moving forward on some of the recommendation. At its next meeting, the Committee will address retention issues that impact recruitment. Commissioner Tolentino reported that the Fire Commission Personnel Committee met with the various stakeholders and their discussion had focused on the internal affairs division issue. He said that the Committee had extended an opportunity to the employee organizations that were not able to attend the meeting additional time to provide input. The Committee will review all recommendations, drafts, and models this Friday and will come up with specific recommendations for the Board to consider. President Sotelo reported that the HRDC Committee had met weekly for the last four weeks. She indicated that a good process was developed and that due to time limits, the various stakeholder groups within the HRDC met outside of the Committee structure to collaboratively provide a response to the audit recommendations. She anticipates having an action plan that addresses the specifics of how the institution will be modified. She expects to discuss the general specifics of the audit at the next Board meeting.

Commissioner Hudley-Hayes opened discussion on the importance of developing an inclusive process to obtain input from as many people as possible. There Board was in consensus on the need for off-site special public hearings to obtain specific comments from individuals on the audit within the established timelines. Commissioners Hudley Hayes and Tolentino requested a change in the assignment of the audit recommendation, the Complaint and Disciplinary Process, Items f. g. h. and 8; that they be assigned to the Fire Commission Personnel Committee for consideration then forwarded to the Fire Commission Technology Committee.

MOTION: Commissioner Hudley-Hayes Motioned to continue with the overall objectives previously established by the Board. To adopt the revised combined audit recommendation (matrix) and the plan outlined by the Commission; and, that the Fire Commission Plan timeline be modified to include at least two hearings specifically to obtain comments on the audits.

MOTION AMENDMENT: Vice President Furillo ask for the two hearings to also serve for the purpose of obtaining comments on the Fire Commission draft action plan. Commissioner Hudley-Hayes accepted the Motion amendment.

SECONDED: Commissioner Tolentino

AYES: 5

NAYS: 0

DISCUSSION CONTD: President Sotelo indicated that the revised handout (Fire Commission draft action plan) would be available on the Department webpage. She

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asked the Fire Chief to help facilitate the outreach process and to assign a staff member to work with the Fire Commission staff to schedule the meetings. She asked the organization representatives to assist the Board by encouraging their membership's participation and input at the Commission hearings. She indicated that the Fire Commission fire station visits had been increased and the schedule is available at the Fire Commission office.

D. Board of Fire Commissioners Committee reports:

1. Status report from the Board of Fire Commissioners EMS Committee [Commissioners Furillo/Friedman]:

- [BFC06-001/CF04-1532] - 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.

Recommendation: The Board support the findings and recommendations outlined in the Fire Department's report dated December 15, 2005.

DISCUSSION: Vice President Furillo reported that the EMS Committee had held discussion with a large group of Department stakeholders and other interested parties on the matter. She said that the consensus at the meeting was that the Committee's recommendation should be based on what is best for public safety. Therefore, the EMS Committee recommends that the Board support what is in the best interest of public safety--supporting the findings and recommendations outlined in the Fire Department's board report dated September 15, 2005. Commissioner Friedman added that the meeting consisted of approximately 25 people that are experts and familiar with the entire issues relative the matter. He said that there was unanimous group support of the Department's findings and recommendation; and that public safety might be affected by supporting a Code 3 program at this time. Commissioner Friedman said that at this time the EMS Committee recommends supporting Fire chief Bamattre's recommendations. Fire Chief Bamattre thanked the EMS Committee and advisors for their input and support of the Department's recommendations.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

MOTION: Commissioner Hudley-Hayes motioned for the Board to support the findings and recommendations of the Fire Commission EMS Committee; and for adoption of the finding and recommendations outlined in the Fire Department's board report dated September 15, 2005.

SECONDED: Commissioner Tolentino

AYES: 5

NAYS: 0

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2. Status report from the Board of Fire Commissioners Technology Committee. [Commissioners Hudley-Hayes/Tolentino]
  - [BFC 06-012] - Public Safety Voice and Data Radio Communications Interoperability Project.

Assistant Chief Bercik provided an informational overview of the project, including the proposed regional recommendations for a data and voice system. She indicated that some of the benefits of the proposed regional system would be greater communication capacity, more channels, better area coverage, and one-channel-interoperability with other agencies. Commissioner Hudley-Hayes indicated that she would like the final report forwarded to the Technology Committee for review; the Board concurred with her request.

[Note: President Sotelo exited the meeting at 4:16 p.m. and returned at 4:21 p.m.]

- [BFC 06-013] - Information Technology 5-year Budget Analysis FY 2001-2006.

MOTION (Hudley-Hayes/Tolentino) relative to the development of a plan to address the Fire Department's technology priorities, funding needs, and the designation of ITA/LAFD funding appropriations.

Recommendation: The Board 1) Direct and authorize the Fire Commission Technology Committee to work with the Fire Chief to develop a plan that will address the technology and funding priorities. 2) Authorize the Fire Commission Technology Committee to assist with the ITA/LAFD funding account appropriation process. (Continued - February 7, 2006 Meeting)

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Hudley-Hayes indicated that there is still on-going communication on finalizing the budget. She acknowledged the work done by Georgia Mattera and Chief Bamattre to move the Budget forward. Commissioner Hudley-Hayes said that in light of the recent audits, the Technology Committee wants to move a motion forward that demonstrates the importance being placed on the \$670,000 line item for technology. She proceeded to explain the reasons and benefits for the request.

MOTION by Commissioner Hudley-Hayes: The Fire Commission Technology Committee (Committee) has met with various Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) employees and has undertaken review of reports, including but not limited to, a historical analysis of the LAFD Information Technology (IT) budget, an LAFD Five-year Budget Analysis, and the LAFD IT Priorities report.

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The Committee has determined that there is a critical need to enhance the Department's communications and tracking systems through the use of technology. The Committee further believes that the efficiency and effectiveness relative to the development of a plan to address the LAFD technology priorities, funding needs, and the designation of ITA/LAFD funding appropriations could be best accomplished by allowing the Fire Department to disburse its own funds as needed, without a two-step process.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Fire Commissioners direct the Fire Chief and his designee to request that the \$670,000 technology line item in the LAFD proposed 2006-07 Budget be fully funded.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Fire Chief request an exemption to the appropriation process, including, but not limited to, the request that the \$670,000 line item for technology be fully funded and to remain in the Fire Department budget.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Fire Chief request the funding allocation be placed under the LAFD's control and accessible through the Fire Department's IT account rather than with the Information Technology Agency's account.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Fire Commissioners authorize the Fire Commission Technology Committee to work with the Fire Chief to develop a plan that will address the technology and funding priorities.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Fire Commissioners authorize the Fire Commission Technology Committee to assist with the ITA/LAFD funding account appropriation process.

SECONDED: Commissioner Tolentino

AYES: 5

NAYS: 0

**3. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

A. Significant Incidents/Activities

Fire Chief Bamattre reported on recent emergency incidents. The Fire Chief also provided information on a press conference held with the Mayor, Police and Fire Departments on the firefighter and police low interest housing loan program. It is anticipated that the program will help public safety and recruitment of police officers.

B. Budget status report

Fire Chief Bamattre indicated that the Mayor's Budget release date is April 20<sup>th</sup>.

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- C. Fire Department Public Service Announcement - Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)

Captain Calvillo showed a preview of the AED public service announcement that is scheduled for release. Ms. June Andrade was acknowledged for her involvement with the program.

- D. Status report on progress of the hiring procedure workgroup.

Chief Yamahata indicating that labor and management developed a workgroup to try and simplify the hiring procedures and provided an overview on the matter. It was noted that the Joint Labor Management Committee has been provided detail information on the issue. The matter was opened for discussion and questions from the Board. Discussion ensued on the access and equity for overtime hiring. Commissioner Tolentino requested information on how the new procedures interface with any audit recommendations. He suggested that the final audit recommendation plan identify steps that have been undertaken by the Department to improve the existing processes but were not identified in any of the audits, but in some way have the potential for interfacing--procedures such as this process. The Board directed that the revised procedures be forwarded to the Fire Commission Personnel Committee for review prior to submission to the Board for approval.

**4. CONSENT ITEMS**

(Taken out of order)

- A. [BFC06-016/BFC05-088] - Fire Chief's transmittal dated January 24, 2006, requesting approval of the proposed revisions to the Fire Department's Honorary Awards Process.

Recommendation: The Commission Executive Assistant II revise the Board of Fire Commissioners Standing Rule No. 20 and thereby incorporate the revisions contained in the Fire Chief's transmittal, approved at the Board meeting of February 28, 2006.

- B. [BFC 06-023] – Fire Department's transmittal dated February 15, 2006, submitting the January CAO Monthly Financial Summary Report.

Recommendation: Receive and File

- C. [BFC 06-026] – Fire Chief's transmittal dated February 20, 2006, requesting approval of the 2005 Brush Clearance Appeal Hearings and appointment of Hearing Officers.

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Recommendation: The Board: 1) Approve the 2005 Brush Clearance Appeal Hearings schedule to begin April 2006. 2) Approve the appointment of Mr. David Shapiro and Ms. Patricia Heyne as the designated Hearing Officers and Mr. Lloyd Heyne as the alternate Hearing Officer.

- D. [BFC 06-027] – Fire Chief's transmittal dated February 21, 2006, transmitting the Fire Department Statistics for Fourth Quarter.

Recommendation: Receive and File

MOTION: Commissioner Furillo motioned for approval of the consent and supplemental agenda items.

SECONDED: Commissioner Hudley-Hayes

AYES: 5

NAYS: 0

**5. ITEMS CALLED SPECIAL (FROM THE CONSENT ITEMS)**

None.

**SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA**

(Taken out of order)

1. [BFC 06-022] Fire Chief's transmittal dated February 20, 2006, transmitting the EMS Resource Deployment Plan Update.

Recommendation: Receive and File

Fire Chief Bamattre provided a summary of the upgrade staffing plan. He indicated that the daily staffing has been increased from 1,045 to 1,051. President Sotelo requested a report that outlines the EMS/Paramedic resources for each fire station be submitted to the EMS Committee for review. She would also like a status report on the 10-member task force detailing.

Chief Bamattre reported that the Tactical Training and Planning Unit was established and will move forward for funding in next years budget. He also reported that Chief Assistant Roxanne Bercik has being appointed to Chief of Staff and would be the liaison to the Board; and that Assistant Chief Manning would assume command of the Tactical Training and Planning Unit.

ACTION: The supplemental agenda was adopted in conjunction with the consent agenda items.



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**6.     ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:49 p.m. (Furillo/Tolentino)

ATTEST BY:

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DALILA T. SOTELO, President

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BLANCA GOMEZ-REVELLES  
Commission Executive Assistant II

Date: June 20, 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.