

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2013**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners convened at 9:05 a.m. in the Fire Commission Meeting Room, City Hall East, 200 N. Main Street, Room 1820, Los Angeles.

- **ROLL CALL**

Present: President Genethia Hudley-Hayes  
Vice President Casimiro Tolentino  
Commissioner Steven Fazio  
Commissioner Andrew Friedman  
Commissioner Alan Skobin  
Fire Chief Brian Cummings  
Deputy City Attorney Julie Raffish

- **FLAG SALUTE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE**

The flag salute was followed by a moment of silence in honor of past and present members of the Los Angeles Fire Department, the fire service, law enforcement, EMS and the military who devote their lives to the protection of the community and of our country.

**1. COMMISSION COMMENTS**

A. Report from the Fire Commission Information and Data Analysis Committee [Skobin]

Commissioner Skobin stated that during the past two weeks he had a number of discussions regarding this with various individuals, and there are actually two sections: first is the data and the second is the performance measurements and FIRESTAT. He said that they are in the process of identifying those areas they want to measure on a regular basis. We will have more concrete things in the future, but he wanted to assure the Commission that they do have momentum. He will be meeting with Fire Chief Cummings following today's Commission meeting.

Commissioner Friedman suggested that this report have a separate heading, rather than appear under Commission Comments, as the Commission will be getting reports on a semi-regular basis. President Hudley-Hayes confirmed this item would be agendaized as a regular agenda item in the future.

**2. REPORT OF THE FIRE CHIEF**

A. Announcements/Meetings/Events

Fire Chief Cummings referenced the Calendar of Events provided, and highlighted the following events: yesterday was a Battle of the Badges Blood Drive (one final blood drive: 2/28 at FS 87); February is Flood Control/Water Safety Awareness Month and National Burn Awareness Month; February 24 – Purim and 85<sup>th</sup> Annual Academy Awards (cost was modest; LAFD was one of the least expensive City resources at event); March – Operation Pull to the Right, March of Dimes, L.A. Marathon, St. Patrick's Day Parade, St. Baldrick's Celebration and Firefighter of the Year Celebration (March 6); March 10 – Daylight Savings Time (check batteries in smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms).

Commissioner Friedman commented that in the past, the LAFD participated in the St. Patrick's Day Parade. He stated that he did not know if there was a cost involved, but if the cost is

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minimal he requested that Chief Cummings inquire whether the LAFD could participate. Chief Cummings stated Chief Stormes and the Public Assemblage Unit would look into the request.

President Hudley-Hayes asked if cost-recovery is received for the resources provided for the 85<sup>th</sup> Annual Academy Awards. Chief Cummings said we bill them for inspectors; we do not bill for our on-duty resources.

B. Significant Incidents/Activities

1. [BFC 13-014] – Significant Incident Summary report for the period of January 21 through January 27, 2013.  
**ACTION: RECEIVED AND FILED.**
2. [BFC 13-024] – Significant Incident Summary report for the period of January 28 through February 3, 2013.  
**ACTION: RECEIVED AND FILED.**
3. [BFC 13-025] – Significant Incident Summary report for the period of February 4 through February 10, 2013.  
**ACTION: RECEIVED AND FILED.**

Deputy Chief Mario Rueda, Emergency Services Bureau, commented that in regard to the question involving cost-recovery and the Academy, he believed LAFD has a contract with the Academy which covers approximately \$100,000 of cost for resources.

Chief Rueda reported on three items not included in the reports:

- When the LAPD became engaged with Dorner [former LAPD Officer Christopher], our Homeland Security Division sent an agency representative to the LAPD in case LAFD resources were needed; it resulted in an LAPD request to fly their SWAT Team to San Bernardino the day Dorner was barricaded.
- Significant fire at a 4-story apartment house in the San Fernando Valley, Valley Village area. The fire started at 10:00 a.m. and took 170 firefighters nearly 90 minutes to extinguish. It was a difficult fire, it was like an oven in the hallways; helmets were scorched from the heat and smoke. That fire used one-fifth of our on-duty resources that day.
- On February 16, the LAFD responded to the home of former City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo. We transported members of his family for smoke inhalation, but no one was seriously hurt, and assisted them in obtaining necessary items and getting rehoused.

Commissioner Skobin inquired regarding the apartment fire in which LAFD assisted apartment dwellers in their well-being afterwards. Chief Rueda stated there are three phases of most of our fires: 1) the fire fight; 2) in this case, we treated five patients at the scene of the fire and set up a medical group; and 3) trying to make a soft landing for residents, i.e. keeping them informed. In this case, working with the Red Cross to set up a shelter, and also immediately on the scene trying to access those things that were critical to people that day, i.e. clothing, shoes, medicine, eyeglasses. LAFD worked with the Red Cross, the Council office, the Mayor's Office and others. Even at the shelter the next day, we worked to secure other items for people because they will be out of that apartment building for likely several weeks as it goes under renovation. Chief Rueda

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commended Battalion Chief Pete Benesch and Assistant Chief Kwame Cooper for the excellent work on this fire.

**MOTION** (Tolentino/Friedman): That the Board receive and file 2.B.1-3.

**ADOPTED:** AYES – 5

**3. PRESENTATIONS**

None.

**4. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

- A. [BFC 13-023] – Meeting Minutes for February 5, 2013  
**ACTION: APPROVED AS AMENDED.**
- B. [BFC 13-012] – Meeting Minutes for August 21, 2012  
**ACTION: APPROVED.**
- C. [BFC 13-013] – Meeting Minutes for October 2, 2012  
**ACTION: APPROVED.**
- D. [BFC 13-009] – Grant Funding for FEMA Search and Rescue Dog Equipment, valued at \$402.97, from the LAFD Foundation  
**ACTION: APPROVED.**
- E. [BFC 13-015] – In-Kind Donation for Fire Station 9 for various items and installation, valued at \$4,421.73, from Steven Needleman  
**ACTION: APPROVED.**
- F. [BFC 13-016] – In-Kind Donation for Fire Station 86 for washer/dryer and drill impact kit, valued at \$1,902.04, from the Toluca Lake Chamber of Commerce  
**ACTION: APPROVED.**
- G. [BFC 13-017] – In-Kind Donation for Fire Station 108 for exercise equipment, valued at \$2,508.75, from the LAFD Foundation  
**ACTION: APPROVED.**
- H. [BFC 13-018] – In-Kind Donation for Fire Station 69 for 4 televisions and 9 mattress toppers, valued at \$2,409.54, from the LAFD Foundation  
**ACTION: APPROVED.**
- I. [BFC 13-019] – Grant Donation for the LAFD Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section's Canine Handler for iPad, valued at \$529, from the LAFD Foundation  
**ACTION: APPROVED.**
- J. [BFC 13-020] – Resolution Authority to Sign for Fire Chief  
**ACTION: APPROVED.**
- K. [BFC 13-021] – In-Kind Donation for all Fire Stations in Battalion 17 for 7 Costco gift cards, valued at \$1,750, from the Douglas Emmett, Inc.  
**ACTION: APPROVED.**

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Commissioner Skobin stated he had a minor clarification on Item 4.A.; he provided Ms. Leticia Gómez, Commission Executive Assistant, written comments for Item 4.A.

**MOTION** (Skobin/Tolentino): That the Board approve Item 4.A., as amended, and Items 4.B. through 4.K.

**ADOPTED:** AYES – 5

**5. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS**

- A. Verbal report by Department on the disposition of LAFD matters considered by or referred to City Council/Committees during the period of February 6, 2013, through February 19, 2013.

Chief of Staff John Vidovich reported on the following matters:

At the February 8 Public Safety Committee meeting, the Committee approved the CAO report relative to a grant award in the amount of \$338,085 from the County of Los Angeles, as provided by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, for the continuation of the Los Angeles Fire Department's surveillance detection program contract with FirstWatch Solutions for software licensing and maintenance services, and related actions.

Also at this meeting, the Department reported in closed session relative to the circumstances surrounding the 15-minute response time to the December 2012 Wilmington Middle School incident. Prior to going into closed session, Chief Deputy David Yamahata explained to the Committee what steps have been taken to prevent a similar delay in the future.

At the February 13 Transportation Committee meeting, the Committee heard a report from LADOT relative to the City's Speed Hump Policy. This included information on the impacts of speed humps on emergency vehicle response times, and a proposal to ban the installation of new speed humps and the replacement of existing speed humps. LAFD was included in the discussion because response times became part of the debate. LAFD has typically not taken a position, but has participated in the discussion. LAFD's message to the Committee acknowledged that speed humps are effective in slowing traffic and our apparatus is no exception; likely if speed humps are installed, our response times will be impacted.

- B. Verbal report from the Recruit Services Section.

Battalion Chief Steve Hissong acknowledged his recruit services team: Captain William Peralta, Ms. Irene Arribillaga, and Firefighter Elena Mattox. He also commended all of the team members that have worked so hard to bring in a good diverse group of individuals for recruitment. At this time there are 13,235 applicants; breakdown of applicants is: 1,957 African-American, 4,154 Hispanics, 596 Asians, 5,477 Caucasians, 128 American Indians and Alaskans, 271 Filipino and 652 undefined. Of those numbers, 12,300 were male and 670 were female. He stated that the next step in our process is on March 2-3, we will have a written test at the Convention Center. Candidates that pass the written test will then be required to submit their CPAT card (physical agility test). In the state, there are currently 8,740 CPAT cards issued: 359 African-Americans, 1,800 Hispanics, 400 Asians, 5,500 Caucasians, 56 Alaskans, 138 Filipinos, and of the breakdown of these numbers 8,498 are male and 242 are female.

Chief Hissong highlighted the following efforts/items:

- Since April, CPAT practices have been occurring at Frank Hotchkins almost six times a month.

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- Two testing centers are continuing to work (Orange and Oxnard) to push more candidates through.
- The Written Preparation Program continues; the tenth one is the end of this month. Over 600 candidates have gone through the written preparation program to date. On February 23, due to a large interest, it was necessary to open the Crenshaw Christian Center to accommodate all of the candidates; 900 were scheduled in the a.m. and 900 were scheduled in the p.m.
- Next will be the Oral Preparation Program; an additional 10 days will be scheduled for this program.
- Everything is on target to open the first academy in January 2014; in March there will be training for all LAFD members that will be part of the selection cadre/panels.

Commissioner Fazio asked if college education is tracked. Chief Hissong stated yes and they try to look at all of the qualifications; extra points are not given for college credits. Commissioner Fazio asked if the Personnel Department creates the rules or does the LAFD have some say in regard to the oral interview process? Does LAFD make the final determination? Chief Hissong stated the Personnel Department is responsible for facilitating and conducting, and they set the policies throughout it, but the interviews themselves will be one Fire Department member and one member from the Personnel Department or outside civilians. On the initial panel reviews and the final panel reviews will consist of only LAFD members with a Personnel Department oversight. Commissioner Fazio asked regarding LAFD becoming a certified CPAT center. Chief Hissong stated we are still looking into it, but there are couple of hurdles we would have to accomplish: 1) the flooring at Frank Hotckins is not conducive because it is too slippery (it is a wood decking), 2) the ventilation system at Frank Hotckins would need to be completely redone and would cost over \$100,000; as well as the other hurdles within the state to be approved as a national testing site.

Commissioner Skobin stated a great deal of time has passed between classes and a lot of things have advanced in terms of technology and learning techniques and learning domains. When we look at many people today, particularly those that would be in the group that is likely to come in, you have people who are iPad savvy and other types of products. Do we have any type of a program or plan where we would have iPads for use or where we would make the various lessons plans available for them? The things they have to learn that would be there electronically so they can use it? Chief Hissong stated that there are elements he is trying to review to bring into our new Fire Academy as we progress: our fitness program, current technology (electronic manuals).

President Hudley-Hayes asked for additional information regarding the selection/interview process. Chief Hissong stated before for the interviews it was one member from the Personnel Department, or an outside civilian and an LAFD member, which will remain the same on the entrance-level interview. The last go-around, it was one member from the Personnel Department and one LAFD member on both the initial panel review and the final panel review. Because of Personnel Department budgetary constraints, they do not have the staffing to be able to devote a member to those panels the entire time. It was agreed that LAFD would conduct those panels with only LAFD, but ensuring we still have that unbiased opinion and that ability to have independent oversight. Therefore, the Personnel Department is able to devote an individual as an independent auditor to look at everybody's reports, make sure that there are no patterns or biases, but not be able to actually sit on every single panel.

Discussion was held regarding the process followed if there is a disagreement on an interview panel; how LAFD staff is selected and prepared to conduct the interviews; how diversity is involved in regard to selecting the interview panel members; as candidates go through the

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process, is information kept that can confirm where candidates fall out by gender, by ethnicity, by training, etc., for analysis purposes. Chief Hissong stated numbers are available for every step where people were lost by ethnicity, gender and also the reasons why people were lost through the selection process; the Personnel Department tracks all this information.

President Hudley-Hayes congratulated Chief Hissong, and the team, because we have had fewer resources and we have a better outcome now; they have done an outstanding job. Chief Hissong also commended Firefighter Lamorris Wilcher has done a phenomenal job in assisting all those members. President Hudley-Hayes recalled a time when LAFD did not have any women, very few people of color, very few college-educated as opposed to anything else.

Commissioner Fazio asked if LAFD has what is needed budgetarily to be online and on-track to do a first rate job in January for this recruit class. Chief Hissong stated we are working very hard to get everything that we need. Chief Cummings stated a big part of that will be our next budget, we are requesting over \$9 million in order to staff the Recruit Training Program, to look at those changes we want to make to the program, and start the first class in January and a second class in that fiscal year. Chief Hissong confirmed there is a small amount coming in this year's budget, a lot of it is through the V-hours to accommodate the selection process. We also have approval to bring in two members in May for the Recruit Training, but most of it will all be implemented in the new fiscal year. Closing down the San Pedro drill site and bringing it all to the Valley Recruit Training Academy while increasing the class size did make a significant cost savings, but there is also a high budgetary need for the Recruit Training Class itself.

C. [BFC 13-022] – Los Angeles Fire Code – Sole Source Contract with the International Code Council (ICC)

Fire Marshal Mark Stormes, Fire Prevention and Public Safety Bureau, stated this report is a companion board report to last July's report regarding the adoption of the State Fire Code in the new Fire Code; the original report was BFC 12-119. Chief Stormes summarized the current report and noted that under Fiscal Impact, page 2, the amount should read \$38,260.09, not \$36,684.84. Additionally, Recommendation No. 2, City Council approval, may not be necessary as the [contract] amount is under \$100,000. Chief Stormes confirmed the contract is sole sourced because the ICC is the only company that does the State Fire Code, and to move property in and out as attachments or amendments to that Fire Code you need to deal with them because they are the sole publisher.

Fire Administrator June Gibson stated she is confused by the details of it [the report], but we will work it out. The issue is not in terms of the dollar amount, the issue is whether or not the funding source has been identified and was previously approved by Council. She will work with Chief Stormes to ensure this [report] is expedited.

**ACTION: APPROVED AS AMENDED.**

**MOTION** (Tolentino/Fazio): That the Board approve the report as amended.

**ADOPTED: AYES – 5**

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

None.

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**7. CLOSED SESSION**

- A. Conference with Legal Counsel pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(a) – To discuss pending litigation of the following cases:

Ramsey v. City of Los Angeles – Case No. 10-05592  
Achan/Haro v. City of Los Angeles – Case No. 12-55303/12-55310  
Jumaane v. City of Los Angeles – Case No. BC294248  
Miller & Rueda v. City of Los Angeles – Case No. BC 416479

President Hudley-Hayes stated that according to the Department's General Counsel this morning, none of the attorneys that could help the Commission to understand the issues involved in these cases was available for closed session. She added that she would be meeting with Assistant City Attorney Carlos De La Guerra and Chief Deputy Daren Palacios to look at exactly what it is that the Commission needs to know in closed session. She asked that these cases not be carried over as there may be others that are more relevant and the structure and format may be different. Deputy City Attorney Julie Raffish commented the cases could be taken off calendar at this time and reagendaized if the need arises.

Commissioner Fazio requested an update on the CERT Program.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned (Tolentino/Skobin) at 9:50 a.m.

ATTEST BY:

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GENETHIA HUDLEY-HAYES  
President

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LETICIA GOMEZ  
Commission Executive Assistant II

Date: March 5, 2013

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.