

Approved

OPEN SESSION MEETING MINUTES

Board/Commission	Kauai Fire Commission	Meeting Date	June 20, 2023
Location	Boards and Commissions Conference Room, Piikoi Building, 4444 Rice Street, Suite 300, Līhu‘e, Kauai, Hawai‘i 96766	Start of Meeting: 2:00 p.m.	2:53 p.m.
Present	Chair Jen Chahanovich; Vice Chair Rodney Yama; Commissioners: Alfredo Jr., Garces, Linda Kaauwai-Iwamoto, Alfred Levinthol, and Trevor Ford. Also present: Board & Commissions Office Staff: Support Clerk Mercedes Omo; Administrator Ellen Ching; Office of the County Attorney: Deputy County Attorney Jenna Tatsey. Kauai Fire Department: Fire Chief Michael Gibson and Chief’s Secretary Soncy Tamashiro.		
Excused			
Absent			

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Meeting Called To Order	Chair Chahanovich called the June 20, 2023, Fire Commission meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.	
Roll Call to Ascertain Quorum	A roll call ensued with six (6) Commissioners present to conduct business.	
Approval of Agenda	Chair Chahanovich called for a motion to approve or amend the Fire Commission’s June 20, 2023, Meeting Notice and Agenda.	Commissioner Garces moved to approve the Fire Commission June 20, 2023, meeting notice and agenda. Commissioner Levinthol seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved.

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Chair's Announcements	Next Monthly Meeting 2:00 p.m. on July 18, 2023, at the Office of Boards and Commissions Conference Room, Suite 300.	
Public Testimony	<p>Chair Chahanovich noted for the record that public testimony will be taken anytime during the meeting.</p> <p>Being that there were no members of the public present to give testimony, Boards and Commissions Administrator Ellen Ching noted for the record that it would not be necessary for Chair Chahanovich to call for public testimony on any of the items listed on the agenda.</p>	
Approval of Minutes May 16, 2023 Open Session Meeting	Chair Chahanovich called for a motion to amend or approve the open session minutes of the May 16, 2023, meeting.	Commissioner Garces moved to approve the open session minutes of the Fire Commission's May 16, 2023, meeting. Commissioner Levinthol seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved.
Chief's Monthly Bureau Reports May 2023 & Pertinent Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Update on Kaua'i Fire and Ocean Safety, including updates on Partnerships, Covid 19 and Resources Highlights b) Administrative Bureau Update, including updates on the budget, staffing, overtime report, facilities, and fleet c) Fire Operations Bureau Update, including statistics on calls for service and brief description of some of the incidents responded to d) Fire Prevention Bureau Update, including monthly statistics e) Fire Training Bureau Update f) Ocean Safety Bureau Update, including monthly statistics and bureau highlights g) Update on Fire Chief Gibson's progress on the Goals and Objectives for FY 2021-2022 	

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	<p>Fire Chief Gibson reported on some highlights and changes that occurred since the Commission’s last meeting in May. He invited the Commissioners to ask any questions.</p> <p>Fire and Ocean Safety Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit Class 32 is in week 10. The class is made of six (6) new recruits. • Junior Lifeguard Summer Program is in its second week. The first week was held at the Salt Pond Park in Hanapēpē, The second week was held at Kalapakī Beach in Līhu’e. The weeklong program runs Monday thru Friday from 10 am to 2 pm at different locations. This year there are over 100 participants. Next week will be held in Hanalei on the north shore. • Fire Chief Gibson conducted 24 separate visits because of the different work shifts. Each visit took about an hour and half. The purpose of these visits is to give the firefighters an opportunity to provide input professionally and openly. All of the feedback that he gets will help him lay down the groundwork to lower firefighters response time. • Partnerships – Deputy Fire Chief Roger Mills has finalized the contract extension for Air One pilot and maintenance services with Airborne Aviation. He commended the public works for their work to replace the old deck at the Lifeguard tower at Pinetree’s. Next on the list is the lifeguard tower at Kē’ē Beach in Hā’ena. The Department is collaborating with the Mayor’s office to implement a First Net Program with the assistance of AT&T. The program will give first responders and emergency services primary access to cellular towers. KEMA, Police and Fire did a presentation on May 31, 2023 to the Hā’ena community and AT&T provided the spokesperson. Managing Director Michael Dahilig was also present at the presentation and he helped a lot by calming the audience by answering their concerns. The general feeling is that the community is opposed to the project because of the height of the tower (95 feet) and radio frequency emissions. No alternate sight was mentioned. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resources – Invitation for Bid to purchase two (2) new fire engines but only one bid came in by Pierce. KFD budgeted 1.9 million to cover the cost of the two (2) engines, however, Pierce came in with a high bid of 2.3 million leaving KFD \$500,000 short and with a delivery time of 1300 days. It was learned after the fact that another manufacture had a delivery time of 500 days. Under the advisement by the Purchasing Department KFD revised the bid which will be released in July. A grant application for a new Fire Engine #5 was completed and submitted. Plans for the FY 2025 budget will include funds to purchase two new fire engines #1 and #2 with consideration being made for manufacture’s delivery date. Fire Chief Gibson expressed concerns about KFD’s reserve engines not being around for too long. Chair Chahanovich expressed her concerns about the long delay of getting new fire engines on board. The average life of a fire engine is 12 years top. Reserve engines average about three (3) year’s tops with the oldest reserve engine being 20 years old. ● KFD loaner helicopters are mission capable. The work being done on Air 1 turbine engine overhaul is expected to be completed in late July. ● Plans for a joint training facility for Fire and Police Department @ Ninini Point is moving along. ● Hanalei Base yard now includes space for ocean safety to house the Department’s new land craft. ● The Hanalei Fire & Police Station now includes a radio room for KEMA to take radio calls. A electrical survey was conducted by KIUC to determine how much more power was needed. Chair Chahanovich commended Fire Chief Gibson for being proactive to ensure that the services the Fire Department and ocean safety provides are on track now and will continue to be on track into the future. <p>Administrative Bureau Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● KFD’s current Accountant I has excepted a position with the County’s Department of Transportation as their Accountant III. Steps are being taken to fill the vacancy. 	

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	<p>Other vacancies include are 2 firefighter positions in fire operations and one ocean safety captain position. The Administration is working with the Department of Human Resources on its promotional process to fill the captain position.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 2023 budget the Department will be returning roughly \$250,000 of unused lease payments back to the General Fund. The original budget of \$25,000 for building maintenance projects went up to \$40,000. Although the budget for vehicle maintenance was set at \$102,000, due to unforeseen expenses they spent \$188,000 to-date. Gasoline expenditures increased \$40,000 – Diesel fuel expenditures increased \$50,000. <p>In reference to the Overtime Report, Vice Chair Yama asked what was the caused for the increase of \$171,580.13 compared to last fiscal year of \$117,585.72. Fire Chief Gibson replied that post covid the Department increased its trainings which accounts for the significant increase in overtime costs. In response to Vice Chair Yama’s question about the training payroll budget if it included overtime, Fire Chief Gibson replied that the number reflected in his report does not any overtime costs.</p> <p>Fire Operations Bureau Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a slight increase in call volume. There were a total of 602 calls for service compared to last year of 581 calls for service. Due to raining weather in May 2023, there were 13 brush fire incidents down 10 from last year of 23 brush fire incidents. Commissioner Iwamoto asked does the community get involve assisting the Fire Department with brush fires to which Fire Chief Gibson replied that unlike Hawai’i island where they have resources available Kauai does not, but with the help of the AG farmers doing manage burns KFD is looking to them for ideas. Councilmember Billy Decosta is a huge support of bringing in livestock to graze the land to reduce the chances of fire outbursts and together they will partner with the Wildfire management organization to look for solutions. Commissioner Ford suggested to Fire Chief Gibson that the Department team up with construction companies that have wire tenders. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three structural fires. The first involved a house in Kalāheo with a unknown start although there were a lot of debris and storage containers scattered within the area, no injuries reported. The second fire was contained to the garage. The cause of the fire was due to an overcharged lithium weed eater battery, and the third and most recent involved a structural fire in Wainiha Valley. Cause unknown, no injuries were reported. <p>Fire Prevention Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The training bureau is focusing its training on the two (2) new fighter members that involved large pre-plan inspections at the Sonesta Resort and Spa in Kalapakī, NFPA online classes and doing community outreach. • Staff participated in discussions with Mayor Derek Kawakami and Managing Director Michael Dahilig, and the County’s Planning Department on how to increase efficiency on the County’s permitting processes. <p>Fire Training Bureau Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 32nd Recruit Class did 1056 hours of training. • The fire captain training cadre has been going to the different fire stations to conduct sets and reps scenario trainings. <p>Ocean Safety Bureau Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Chief Gibson made visits to the different lifeguard towers. May was a busy month for the Roving Patrol seeing a significant increase in call volumes compared to the previous month. Vice Chair Yama asked what the concept of the roving patrol to which Fire Chief Gibson replied that roving patrol means that staff is not committed to a specific tower. The new fiscal year the Department were granted 12 new ocean safety positions which come into effect on October 1, 2023. The Department’s plan 	

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	<p>is to convert all ocean safety officers from working 5 eight-hour days to working 4/10's. The conversion will give OSC expended coverage that they needed and will allow flexibility in terms of the hours of coverage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regarding much needed assistance with the Junior Lifeguard Program, the Department reached out to graduates of the prior years programs to help chaperone the kids and assist staff in any they can. <p>Commissioner Garces commended Fire Chief Gibson and his management team for having the vision to create a budget that will provide a high level of public service.</p> <p>Chair Chahanovich called for a motion to receive the Chief's Monthly Bureau Report for May 2023.</p>	<p>Commissioner Garces moved to receive the Chief's Monthly Bureau Reports for May 2023. Vice Chair Yama seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, the motion carried.</p>
<p>KFC 2023-4</p>	<p><u>Discussion and decision making on changing the Fire Chief's goals and objectives and possibly form a permitted interaction group (PIG) pursuant to Hawai'i Revised Statutes Section 92-2.5 (b) (1-2) to draft and/or review and to provide recommendations on new goals and objectives for fiscal year 2023/ 2024. (Deferred on May 16, 2023)</u></p> <p>Administrator Ching stated that each Commissioner should have received a copy of of Fire Chief Gibson's goals and objectives in their meetings packets.</p> <p>Chair Chahanovich stated that at the last meeting, the Commission deferred the item to allow Fire Chief Gibson to make the necessary changes to his goals and objectives which is before the Commission today. She asked the Commissioners to take a minute to review the</p>	

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	<p>goals and objectives.</p> <p>Administrator Ching pointed out three (3) options for the Commissioners to choose from. 1) The Commission could approve the goals and objectives; 2) The Commission could amend the goals and objectives; or 3) Take more time to get into the details of the Chief's goals and objectives by forming an permitted interaction group.</p> <p>Chair Chahanovich stated that at the last meeting, the Commissioners agreed that they were comfortable not to form a permitted interaction group and that they (Commissioners) were comfortable with the Chief's goals and objectives with some tweaks. With that being said, she called for a motion to either approve, amend, or form a permitted interaction group.</p> <p>Vice Chair Yama asked Chief Gibson relative to the success measurements for each of the goals if he had a timeline to accomplish his goals within the said fiscal year or would be on a continuous basis to which Fire Chief Gibson replied that his vision is to have his goals completed in a year.</p> <p>He knows that goal number #1 compared to goal #2 is a huge reach, but he wants accountability based on a conversation he had with one of the fire captains about some firefighters not being prepared when a call comes which is unacceptable. Firefighters need to be ready to move at moment's notice, anything less is unacceptable. Everyone needs to be on the same page including supervisors for the good of the community.</p> <p>Fire Chief Gibson stated that he will assign a group to help measure the success of the goals, but the proof will be can he analysis the data and send it to the fire crews to show them that they are not meeting the mark.</p>	

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	<p>Chair Chahanovich commented that Goal #1 is a good goal, and Vice Chair Yama agreed.</p> <p>Fire Chief Gibson stated that he would update the Fire Commission on the status of each goal on a monthly basis.</p> <p>With no further discussion, Chair Chahanovich called for a motion to accept and approve Fire Chief Gibson’s Goals and Objectives for FY 2023-2024.</p>	<p>Vice Chair Yama moved to approve and accept Fire Chief Gibson’s Goals and Objectives for FY 2023-2024.</p> <p>Commissioner Levinthol seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, the motion carried.</p>
<p>KFC 2023-5</p>	<p><u>Discussion and decision-making on forming a permitted interaction group (PIG) to draft Fire Chief Michael Gibson’s Annual Consolidation Evaluation Report for the period of June 2022 to June 2023, for presentation at the Fire Commission next executive session meeting.</u></p> <p>Administrator Ching stated that an electronic copy of the Chief’s evaluation will be emailed to them to complete and once they complete their evaluation, they should email their evaluation to Ms. Omo for her to collate results. She pointed out that the previous evaluation, the Commission gave her permission to draft the Consolidated Report, and if the Commission wants her to draft the Report for this evaluation, she would be more than happy to do it. She noted that once she receives the collated report from staff she will go ahead and draft a Consolidated Report for the Commissioners to review and to possibly approve. Additionally, Administrator Ching asked the Commissioners to wait until they receive the June Month Report before they complete their evaluation of Fire Chief Gibson.</p> <p>Vice Chair Yama asked if Fire Chief Gibson’s 6-month evaluation that was completed earlier would be attached to the Chief’s Annual Evaluation Report to which Administrator Ching replied yes.</p>	

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	<p>Chair Chahanovich took the time to explain to Commissioner Trevor Ford about the evaluation process. She explained that each Commissioner would receive a workable evaluation form via email to complete and email back to Ms. Omo for her to collate all of the Commissioners comments into one report. Administrator Ching would then take the Collated Report and begin drafting a Consolidated Report based on the Commissioners comments reflected in the Collated Report. Once that step is completed the Commissioners would each receive a draft copy of the Consolidated Report to review and to make any necessary changes if needed, if there are no changes, she will call for a motion to approve and accept Fire Chief Gibson’s Consolidated Evaluation Report.</p> <p>Chair Chahanovich noted that being that Commissioner Ford is new to the Commission, he would have the option to participate in the Chief’s evaluation or not.</p> <p>Vice Chair Yama asked for clarification on how data reflected in the Chief’s Monthly Reports are gathered to which Fire Chief Gibson replied that Ms. Tamashiro would facilitate all of the communications between the bureaus and will put the Report together for his review, edits, and final approval. He added that on a normal bases he would hold weekly staff meetings with all of the battalion chiefs and fire captains to address action items, and questions for the up coming weeks or barriers from the previous week, and for them to provide him with data/stats for the given month.</p> <p>With no further discussion or motion needed, Chair Chahanovich designated Administrator Ellen Ching to draft the Collated Report and the Consolidated Evaluation Report for the Commissioners to review at the July meeting.</p>	
<p>Executive Session KFC 2023-1</p>	<p><u>Pursuant to Hawai’i Revised Statutes §92-4 and §92-5 (4), the purpose of this Executive Session is for the Commissioners to consult its attorney on questions and issues pertaining to the Commission’s powers, duties, privileges, immunities, and liabilities as it may relate to Fire Chief Michael Gibson’s Annual Performance Evaluation.</u></p>	<p>There was no motion to enter Executive Session.</p>

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Adjournment	There being no further business to conduct, Chair Chahanovich sought a motion to adjourn the meeting.	Commissioner Garces moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Levinthol seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Mercedes Omo, Staff Support Clerk

Reviewed and Approved by: _____
Jen Chahanovich , Chair

(x) Approved as circulated on August 18, 2023

() Approved as amended. See minutes of _____ meeting.