

April 27, 2018

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1 FIRE AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION
 2 COUNTY OF MAUI
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 7 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
 8 REGULAR MEETING
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 13 Held at ILWU, 896 Lower Main, Wailuku, Hawaii,
 14 commencing at 8:09 a.m., on August 27th, 2018.
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 19 REPORTED BY: SANDRA J. GRAN, RPR/CSR #424
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1 (August 27th, 2018, 8:09 a.m.)
 2 * * *
 3 CHAIR HIRATA: Okay. It's 8:08 a.m., I'm going to
 4 call this meeting to order. The first order of business is
 5 public testimony on agenda items. Do we have anybody here to
 6 testify?
 7 MS. PETERSON: Yeah. First is Ikaika Blackburn.
 8 CHAIR HIRATA: Ikaika. Please come up, introduce
 9 yourself, state your name, please.
 10 MR. BLACKBURN: Ikaika Blackburn, Firefighter I,
 11 Maui Fire Department.
 12 Good morning, Commission Members, Kyle, Tancayo. My
 13 name is Ikaika Blackburn and I'm a Firefighter I with Maui
 14 Fire Department. Thank you for your service and your
 15 diligence throughout this process and I wouldn't want to be in
 16 your shoes. You really have great candidates for the fire
 17 chief and I don't envy your position, so thank you.
 18 I'm here to testify on the character of Chief
 19 Montalvo. As I mentioned, I'm a firefighter and I've served
 20 under Chief Montalvo at the Wailuku Fire Station, Engine 1 for
 21 about seven years. He was my driver, my acting officer for
 22 approximately two years, and then was promoted to captain,
 23 then chief.
 24 Working with him, I was able to witness his
 25 commitment first hand not only to the fire department, but

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1 ATTENDANCE
 2 COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:
 3 Charles Hirata, Chair
 4 Edwin Misaki, Vice-Chair
 5 Jack Freitas, Member
 6 Kyle Ginoza, Member
 7 William Kennison, Member
 8 Gregg Lundberg, Member
 9 Travis Tancayo, Member
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 11 STAFF:
 12 Jeffrey Ueoka, Deputy Corporation Counsel
 13 Jill Matsui Peterson, MFD Commission
 14 Chasseray Kaawa, MFD Secretary III
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1 also to the community as well. As it's known, he's also a
 2 coach, umpire, and referee. His commitment to serve is
 3 selfless. From the sports capacity, always being available to
 4 help with the kids and/or the community where it's needed.
 5 From the fire aspect, always the first to work, last to leave.
 6 He signs up for all the educational classes and has even taken
 7 his own time to further pursue education via online classes
 8 with Honolulu Community College. I've seen his commitment
 9 from his countless perfect attendance certificates -- not like
 10 mine -- answering the call whenever the department was in
 11 need, and currently, as we needed a new deputy chief, he
 12 stepped in and filled the shoes seamlessly.
 13 If there's another takeaway, I also remember many,
 14 many of times he being shorted on his paycheck, due overtime
 15 for teaching classes during the week, but instead of making a
 16 scene or hassling HR or lovely Chas over here, he said,
 17 "Sometimes we just have to give back. The county has given us
 18 a lot." That says something, that says something I'll never
 19 forget.
 20 He also served the department within our
 21 firefighter's union. Experience has shown that at times the
 22 union and administration can disagree; case in point, Honolulu
 23 Fire Department. His knowledge in the union capacity would
 24 bridge the gap between union and administration. It adds
 25 fairness and shows ability to reach across the table to make

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1 it work for the betterment of the department and community.
2 It's also -- this is also important when working with the
3 council, the ability to reach across the table, to bend and
4 flex and work together.

5 (Commissioner Lundberg entered the room.)

6 MR. BLACKBURN: Chief Montalvo has shown character
7 not to allow his personal feelings to reflect on his
8 professional actions. Everyone is treated fairly, despite how
9 one may feel about a person, what's right is right and what's
10 wrong is wrong. Personal friendships, relationships, and/or
11 dislikes don't have a bearing on his professional ream. He's
12 shown his loyalty and commitment to this county for over 30
13 years as a police officer and current firefighter, as a coach,
14 an official, and friend.

15 As I mentioned previously, I do not envy your
16 position. Everything mentioned does not reflect lesser on any
17 means on the other candidates you have to choose from. I've
18 had the privilege to work with each of them, I've just had
19 extended time with Chief Montalvo in Wailuku. The candidates
20 you have are all great firemen, leaders, and I'm proud to call
21 each one of them a brother. Mahalo.

22 CHAIR HIRATA: Thank you.

23 Any questions?

24 (No response.)

25 CHAIR HIRATA: Seeing none, thank you very much.

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1 family of Lahaina. My point is that I'm tied directly into
2 this land and our community at so many levels and I'm really
3 proud of that.

4 Today I felt the need to come in and share my
5 thoughts about community and how this next fire chief should
6 be committed to serving them. The truth is that not all of
7 these candidates love this community as I do. Not all of
8 these candidates will commit to serving them righteously and
9 tirelessly. It is not about resumes, certifications,
10 designations, and/or alphabets at the end of their name that
11 motivate good work. It is the love and passion for something
12 that motivates good work. Please look at the candidates and
13 investigate which one is passionate about serving our
14 community, which candidate is tied in and connected to this
15 community and willing to serve tirelessly.

16 Your decision of our next fire chief is a very
17 important one. The amount of love, service, and commitment
18 that will go into our community is directly impacted by your
19 decision, please choose wisely.

20 Thank you for your time. Aloha.

21 CHAIR HIRATA: Thank you.

22 Any questions from members?

23 (No response.)

24 CHAIR HIRATA: Seeing none, thank you very much.

25 Any other testimony?

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1 MR. LONOKAI LUA-HEWETT: Good morning.

2 CHAIR HIRATA: Please introduce yourself.

3 MR. LONOKAI LUA-HEWETT: My name is Amos Lonokailua-
4 Hewett, I'm a battalion chief for Battalion 2, Maui Fire
5 Department.

6 CHAIR HIRATA: Thank you. Can you spell your last
7 name, please.

8 MR. LONOKAI LUA-HEWETT: L-O-N-O-K-A-I-L-U-A hyphen
9 H-E-W-E-T-T.

10 CHAIR HIRATA: Thank you.

11 MR. LONOKAI LUA-HEWETT: So good morning,
12 Commissioners. I was unable to testify before you on August
13 20th because I was off island and I was also uncertain that I
14 could make it today because I'm also on duty. I did, however,
15 submit my written testimony that I believe you all should
16 have.

17 I felt the need to come in today to add to my
18 testimony. My message is about community. I was born and
19 raised in Maui. I'm a Native Hawaiian with ancestral ties to
20 all of the islands and specific ties to Maui, Molokai, and
21 Lanai. In addition, my great-great-grandfather was a Japanese
22 immigrant from Chiba, Japan, his name was Kunizou Susuki. My
23 grandfather on my mom's side was John Bak from Korea, another
24 plantation worker that raised my mom in Halliimaile. I married
25 a Lahaina girl, Mitzie Colon, direct relation to the Oponui

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1 (No response.)

2 CHAIR HIRATA: Okay. Before we continue on, I just
3 want to make a statement. I just want to, you know, state my
4 appreciation for the efforts of the firemen, you know, during
5 the big fire in Lahaina, all their hard work. I seen the guys
6 were tired and fighting an unbelievable fire. Not too many
7 people know what it's like to face a wall of flame, you know,
8 30, 40 feet high whipped up by big winds. So on behalf of
9 myself I'd like to thank you all for the hard work that you
10 guys did and in saving the property and saving lives.

11 COMMISSIONER KENNISON: Yeah. Thank you.

12 I would like to add to those comments. I think as I
13 read some of the reports that I followed the news, what you
14 guys did, you guys saved quite a bit of homes and if you guys
15 didn't act as quickly as you did, you know, a lot more homes
16 would've been lost, so thank you.

17 CHAIR HIRATA: Any other comments made by anybody?

18 COMMISSIONER TANCAYO: Just my brothers did an
19 excellent job. Even though we did lose a few homes and some
20 property, overall when you look at the scope of what was
21 saved, you did a tremendous job. From what I understand,
22 we're very thankful that there were backup crews because of
23 the hurricane that were in place to prepare for the hurricane,
24 but they turned into fire fighting mode and I think did an
25 awesome job from the fire department.

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1 CHAIR HIRATA: Okay. At this time I would like to
 2 recess for executive session.
 3 (Pause in Proceedings: 8:17 a.m.-4:51 p.m.)
 4 CHAIR HIRATA: Okay. Back in session. All right.
 5 Do we need a motion for this?
 6 MR. UEOKA: Yes.
 7 CHAIR HIRATA: I would like to make a -- would you
 8 like to make a motion?
 9 VICE CHAIR MISAKI: Go ahead, Gregg.
 10 COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: I'll make a motion to
 11 appoint David Thyne as fire chief of Maui County Fire
 12 Department.
 13 CHAIR HIRATA: Second?
 14 VICE CHAIR MISAKI: I second.
 15 CHAIR HIRATA: Second by Ed. All in favor.
 16 MR. UEOKA: No. Discussion.
 17 CHAIR HIRATA: Any discussion?
 18 COMMISSIONER FREITAS: Discussion. You want to make
 19 a nomination; right?
 20 COMMISSIONER KENNISON: Yeah, I do. I move to
 21 nominate candidate --
 22 MR. UEOKA: Oh, I guess you have a motion on the
 23 floor, though, huh?
 24 COMMISSIONER FREITAS: Oh, you do?
 25 MR. UEOKA: Yeah, there's a motion on the floor.

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1 COMMISSIONER KENNISON: Yeah. Just vote.
 2 MR. UEOKA: Okay. No discussion then.
 3 CHAIR HIRATA: No discussion?
 4 (No response.)
 5 CHAIR HIRATA: All in favor?
 6 (Response.)
 7 CHAIR HIRATA: Everybody except Jack and William.
 8 MR. UEOKA: Yeah, you might to verbally --
 9 CHAIR HIRATA: Hold on a second. So in favor we
 10 have Travis Tancayo, Ed Misaki, Charles Hirata, Gregg
 11 Lundberg, and Kyle Ginoza.
 12 Any opposed?
 13 (Response.)
 14 CHAIR HIRATA: We have -- opposed we have Jack
 15 Freitas and William Kennison. So the motion is carried.
 16 COMMISSIONER FREITAS: We've got a new chief.
 17 CHAIR HIRATA: We have a new chief. Thank you very
 18 much, everyone.
 19 VICE CHAIR MISAKI: And we can make our plane.
 20 CHAIR HIRATA: Anybody move to close?
 21 VICE CHAIR MISAKI: I move that we adjourn.
 22 COMMISSIONER TANCAYO: Oh, we should make clear that
 23 no one is to discuss outside until the candidates can be
 24 notified.
 25 MR. UEOKA: I believe the plan is the chair -- after

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1 this meeting closes, the chair will get on the phone, call the
 2 three other candidates, and then call the new fire chief.
 3 VICE CHAIR MISAKI: Okay.
 4 CHAIR HIRATA: Correct.
 5 COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Do we need to officially --
 6 do we need to put a date to it, Jeff?
 7 MR. UEOKA: I guess it was -- I believe it was
 8 effective immediately.
 9 COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Okay.
 10 VICE CHAIR MISAKI: I move that we adjourn.
 11 CHAIR HIRATA: Any second?
 12 COMMISSIONER GINOZA: Second.
 13 CHAIR HIRATA: Second by Kyle. All in favor.
 14 (Response.)
 15 CHAIR HIRATA: Meeting adjourned.
 16 (The proceedings were adjourned at 4:56 p.m.)
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Reporter's Certificate

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1 CERTIFICATE

2 STATE OF HAWAII)
 3 COUNTY OF MAUI) SS.

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 5 I, Sandra J. Gran, Certified Shorthand Reporter for
 6 the State of Hawaii, hereby certify that on August 27th, 2018,
 7 at 8:09 a.m. the proceedings was taken down by me in machine
 8 shorthand and was thereafter reduced to typewritten form under
 9 my supervision; that the foregoing represents, to the best of
 10 my ability, a true and correct transcript of the proceedings
 11 had in the foregoing matter.

12
 13 I further certify that I am not an attorney for any
 14 of the parties hereto, nor in any way concerned with the
 15 cause.

16
 17 DATED this 13th day of September, 2018, in Maui,
 18 Hawaii.

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22 Sandra J. Gran, RPR
 23 Hawaii CSR 424
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