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 via BlueJeans, commencing at 8:00 a.m., on
14	September 15th, 2021.
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19	REPORTED BY: SANDRA J. GRAN, RPR/CSR #424
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1	ATTENDANCE
2	COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:
3	Kyle Ginoza, Chair
4	Lisa Vares, Vice Chair
5	Gregg Lundberg, Member
6	Dwight Burns, Member
7	Donna Sterling, Member
8	Punahele Alcon, Member
9	Max Kincaid, Jr., Member
10	Dylan Andrion, Member
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12	STAFF:
13	Gary Murai, Deputy Corporation Counsel
14	Richelle Wakamatsu, Commission Secretary
15	Misty Cordeiro, Office Operations Assistant
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1	(September 15, 2021, 8:00 a.m.)
2	* * *
3	CHAIR GINOZA: Sorry, I guess I got muted. Let me
4	start over again. Lisa Vares.
5	VICE CHAIR VARES: Present.
6	CHAIR GINOZA: Gregg Lundberg.
7	COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Present.
8	CHAIR GINOZA: Donna. Donna?
9	COMMISSIONER STERLING: (Gesturing.)
1,0	CHAIR GINOZA: You're here. Hi, Donna.
11	Punahele Alcon is excused.
12	Max Kincaid, Jr.
13	COMMISSIONER KINCAID: Present.
14	CHAIR GINOZA: Thank you, Max.
15	Dylan Andrion.
16	COMMISSIONER ANDRION: Present.
17	CHAIR GINOZA: Thank you, Dylan.
18	Makalapua Kanuha. Oh, she's excused. Sorry about
19	that.
20	So we have quorum. We also have in the room from
21	corporation counsel Gary Murai and fire department staff
22	Richelle Wakamatsu and Misty Cordeiro.
23	I'd like to move on to public testimony on agenda
24	items. Please sign up to testify in the chat, and at the end,
25	I'll ask for members to or members of the public to either

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unmute themselves and be recognized or -- to be able to
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 2
      testify, but please use the chat if possible. And for
 3
      those --
                MR. MURAI: One minute.
 4
                (Inaudible.)
 5
                               Sorry, we're gonna take a one-minute
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                CHAIR GINOZA:
 7
      recess because something -- we need to figure out what's --
 8
      what's happening with our mics in the conference room.
 9
      meeting is in recess.
                (Pause in Proceedings)
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11
                CHAIR GINOZA:
                               Thank you, everyone. Sorry for the
12
      technical difficulties. I'll test it really quick with
13
      Commissioner Dylan Andrion. Dylan, can you hear me and see
14
      me?
15
                COMMISSIONER ANDRION: We can hear and see you,
      Chair.
             Mahalo.
16
17
                CHAIR GINOZA:
                               Okay. Awesome. Thank you.
                So I don't know where I cut off the last time, but
18
      we are in the public testimony stage of the meeting and what
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20
      we'll do is we have the chat function, and for those that are
21
      logged on via the web, via BlueJeans, please log -- or please
22
      notify us via the chat if you desire to testify. And for
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      those that are calling in via phone, after we go through the
24
      video testimony, I will ask if there are other members who
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      wish to -- or other members of the public who wish to testify,
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and at that time, please, please unmute yourself and be
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      recognized and we'll -- we'll list you down. So just as a
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      housekeeping matter, we will limit public testimony to three
      minutes. Please, for those who are not actively -- for the
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 5
      ones that are not the active testifiers, please mute your
 6
     phones and computers and so that there's no feedback that we
 7
      receive in the meeting. Thank you.
                So, Cory, who's the first person that we have to
 8
 9
      testify?
                MS. VICENS: Chair, the first testifier is Geralyn
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11
      "Geri" Onaga, followed by Professor Stacy Rogers.
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                Ms. Onaga, if you will unmute video and your mic.
                MS. ONAGA: Good morning.
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                CHAIR GINOZA: Good morning.
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                MS. ONAGA: Can you hear me?
                CHAIR GINOZA: Yes. Hi, Geri.
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                MS. ONAGA: Hi, Kyle. Good morning.
                CHAIR GINOZA: Good morning. Go ahead.
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                MS. ONAGA: Good morning, Chair, Members of the
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      Commission, and everyone in attendance. Thank you for the
21
      opportunity to testify this morning.
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                It is my pleasure to endorse Amos Lonokailua-Hewett
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      for the position of fire chief for the department of fire and
24
     public safety. I have known Amos for many years. I became
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first acquainted with him when he started as fire captain in

2008, then working more closely with him when he served as the
department's training captain from 2009 to 2013. We became
and have remained good friends ever since. I recently retired
as a senior human resources specialist for the County of
Maui's Department of Personnel Services, and during that time,
32 years, I've been blessed to work for and alongside many
different classes of, if you would say, workers from laborers
to attorneys, department directors, division chiefs, clerical
staff. I believe the many experiences that I have that I
had that I have have resulted in my being a pretty good
judge of character. It was during my early years at the
department of personnel services while serving as the county's
training specialist that I became more acquainted with Amos.
Over the years, I have worked with several training captains,
and I can say without question that Amos demonstrated superior
competency, passion, and determination for elevating the
training division's mission. As part of my human resource
specialist duties, I oversee the county's annual employee
recognition program, and I was not the least bit surprised
when Amos received the department's Manager of the Year award
in 2010, and then when the fire ground operations team under
his leadership was recognized as the department's Team of the
Year and awarded the overall County of Maui Team of the Year,
and that was in 2015. So I believe that Amos will excel in
this position, and while others may claim to possess the

1	vision, passion, and commitment to get the job done, it
2	behooves you as the commission to select a candidate that will
3	follow through and actually put that vision into place,
4	resulting in sustainable programs that benefit the department
5	and the community. It is for those reasons and more that I
6	can recommend without question and put my full-fledged support
7	behind Amos for this position of fire chief. Thank you.
8	CHAIR GINOZA: Thank you, Geri.
9	Does any commissioner have any questions for the
10	testifier?
11	COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: No questions.
12	CHAIR GINOZA: All right. Seeing none, Cory and
13	just to clarify for those testifying, when you hear the bell,
14	that's one minute to remaining in your testimony. Thank
15	you.
16	Cory.
17	MS. VICENS: Chair, we have the next person to
18	testify is Professor Stacy Rogers, followed by Colin Yamamoto.
19	Professor, if you would unmute your mic and video.
20	Thank you.
21	MR. ROGERS: Good morning. Can you hear me?
22	CHAIR GINOZA: Yes.
23	MR. ROGERS: Oh, great. Thanks for the time. I'm
24	here to testify quickly for Amos Hewett for the position of
25	fire chief for the commission. Just real quickly, this is an

unsolicited testimony. I found out about this through the Western Fire Chiefs, it came across my desk, and then I picked up the phone and called Amos, and he told me that they were having public testimony, so I wanted to make sure I said a few good words for Amos. So, first of all, it's unsolicited. I am a professor with the University of Hawaii, but I'm not speaking in that capacity today; I'm speaking as a normal civil servant worker person living in Hawaii.

I spent -- a little history, I spent 30 -- the last 30 years with the University of Hawaii running fire and environmental emergency response programs in the community college system, and for 11 years before that, I worked in wildland fire on the front lines for the Alaska service as a hotshot and fire suppression specialist. So for the last 41 years, I've been pretty actively involved in fire. I've been really fortunate to work with the Maui Fire Department and all their great people, and the Maui Fire Department is loaded with some great folks.

I really think Amos is a good choice for you folks. His experience, along with his drive, his commitment, his integrity, the fact that he's a cultural practitioner in Hawaiian, that he speaks Hawaiian, and that the history of Hawaiian culture in our fire departments is a critical part of the history of the fire service in Hawaii. I don't know if you know it, but we are the only state that had someone from a

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monarchy serve in the fire department, and Hawaii is one of
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 2
      the oldest fire departments west of the Rockies, so there's a
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      long history there, and this is a very serious position. Most
      of all, I think you want a fire chief, so when the fire rolls
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      over the hill, you want a fire chief who's gonna lead their
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 6
                  They don't send a battalion chief out to lead
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      their personnel, they take the helm, and that will be Amos.
      His ability to lead and direct the fire service is -- will be
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 9
      unequalled, and I have full faith in his ability to do that.
      His ability to plan, implement, train, teach his vision for
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11
      the fire department is one of the best I've ever seen in my
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      career.
                So with that said, I'll leave it to you folks.
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                                                                 It's
      a very, very serious consideration, it's a very serious
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15
      position, people's lives are at risk in this decision, and
      Amos knows that full well and will do a good job for you.
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17
      Thank you.
18
                CHAIR GINOZA:
                               Thank you, Professor Rogers.
                Does any commissioner have any questions for
19
20
      Professor Rogers?
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                COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: No questions.
22
                CHAIR GINOZA: Seeing none, thank you.
23
                Cory.
24
                MS. VICENS: Chair, the next person to testify is
25
      Colin Yamamoto, followed by Jeffrey Giesea, Giesea.
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Mr. Yamamoto, if you will unmute your mic and video, 1 2 we're ready for your testimony. Thank you. 3 MR. YAMAMOTO: Good morning, Chair. Can you -- can 4 you hear me? 5 CHAIR GINOZA: Yes. Go ahead. 6 MR. YAMAMOTO: Good morning. 7 CHAIR GINOZA: Good morning. 8 MR. YAMAMOTO: Good morning, Chair. My name is 9 Colin Yamamoto. I'm -- I'm sorry, I'm having problems with my video; I don't believe you guys can see me, but -- so my name 10 11 is Colin Yamamoto. I retired from the fire department about 12 three and a half years ago as the battalion chief of ocean 13 safety, and I'm here to support Amos Lonokailua-Hewett for fire chief. And I just wanted to give you some information 14 15 about Chief Amos that you probably already saw in his -- I'm assuming in his resume, but, you know, Amos, Chief Amos, 16 17 designed and supervised the construction of the joint training center at the -- you know, the Kahului Airport, which is such 18 a huge, huge benefit for training for all of the whole 19 20 department, and it's probably the most -- best training that 21 we ever got and it's just a wonderful place for -- for us to 22 gain experience of live-fire training. 23 Also, I consider Amos an expert in performance 24 evaluations. Jamie Adams, the department's current VPO, gave 25 training to the whole county years ago, and it's a very

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important part of supervisors and -- or captains and administrators, because the performance evaluation -evaluations documents substandard or exceeds performance to -which is really important to reward good behavior and to correct bad behavior, so it's very important. Also, Amos was the lead in the blue card command, which was another huge training opportunity for all the captains and drivers, and it was -- it was really, really good training. And also, while Amos was the training captain, he organized the training and certification process to be done for fire service instructors at various levels. I just want to mention that Amos is a systems kind of guy; he develops systems, and systems are important to -- whenever you have problems, it's because the system is not correct, and Amos knows how to correct systems. But I also wanted to mention that the commission is

in a very good position right now because you have two very worthy candidates, you have Chief Amos and Chief Ventura.

They're both very worthy, but I think Amos, his experience and knowledge, would be better for the fire chief position. And I just wanted to share about Chief Ventura that back in 2015, I needed more documentation on ocean rescues because I -- I felt that ocean vendors because they weren't given safety briefings to the -- to the --

CHAIR GINOZA: I've got to cut you off. Can you wrap up really quick?

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MR. YAMAMOTO: Yes, I will wrap up in 30 seconds.
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                CHAIR GINOZA:
                               Sorry, sorry, Colin, I've got to cut
 3
      you off.
               But thank you.
                Does any commissioner have any questions for Colin?
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                COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Can I hear the rest of what
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 6
      he had to say?
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                CHAIR GINOZA:
                               Sure, yeah.
 8
                Could you just finish up, Colin?
 9
                MR. YAMAMOTO: Okay.
                                      Thank you, Chair.
                So back in 2015, I -- I needed the station captains
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11
      to document better on their ocean rescue incidents, and so
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      I -- I made -- I had this directive given to the battalion
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      chief to give to the captains, and Chief Ventura was the only
      captain to make a cheat sheet out of that directive I gave so
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15
      that he could better document all the things that I needed on
      the fire report. So, you know, Chief Ventura is a -- also a
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17
      very worthy candidate and if -- if they both agreed, if Chief
      Amos could be the fire chief and Chief Ventura could be the
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19
      deputy, man, you've got a winning team right there.
20
      you.
21
                CHAIR GINOZA:
                               Thank you, Colin.
22
                Any other commissioner have any questions for the
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      testifier?
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                COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: None.
                                               Thank you.
25
                               Okay. Seeing none, Cory.
                CHAIR GINOZA:
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MS. VICENS: Chair, the next person to testify is Jeffrey Giesea, followed by Faith Chase.

Jeffrey, if you would kindly unmute your mic and video, we're ready for your testimony. Mahalo.

MR. GIESEA: Thank you very much. Hi. My name is Jeff Giesea. I would -- I'd like to start by acknowledging the debt that our department owes to Chief Amos. When he was training captain, he did real -- I mean, really put so much energy and effort into developing our department's training programs; we owe him a tremendous debt for that. I'm extremely grateful. He really brought our training programs up to what I can confidently say I think we have the best training programs in the state, and that is in large part due to his efforts. So I definitely want to acknowledge that and -- and show that I value that very much.

I'd like to share my experiences with Chief Ventura. You know, ever since he got in -- he got in slightly after me. Ever since he got in, he's had the reputation of being basically exactly who you want as a firefighter. His skills have been exemplary; his work ethic, exemplary; his attitude, exemplary; his ability to get along with the people he works with and help them bring out the best, exemplary. That's been his reputation from day one. In my 20 years, I've worked with him in a variety of capacities. He was my -- actually worked under me in health and safety, he worked under me in hazmat,

and I've been working under him in the last -- for the last couple years when he's been deputy chief. All of my experiences with Chief Ventura have done nothing but reinforce that reputation that he's had.

It's -- you know, I -- years ago when Brad was my driver at hazmat, I had an interview for battalion chief and one of the questions they asked was tell us about somebody who -- I forget the specifics, but somebody you admire, and you know, you know, what could you learn from them, etc., a typical interview question. The first person who came to mind --

CHAIR GINOZA: One minute.

MR. GIESEA: -- was Brad, and I think he's -- you know, it's pretty rare to think of your subordinate as the person who you find most influencing -- influential on you, but I just -- throughout my time working with him, I just have felt like this guy is -- is doing it right. He clearly has the skill set, you know. You folks on the commission have seen this, right, the last -- the last three years. I mean, he's done an outstanding job as Fire Two, he's been effectively not just doing the job of Fire Two, but really kind of training to be -- and doing a lot of the work of Fire One as well. He's got the full skill set for that, he's got the attitude for that, he's got the temperament for that, and I'd like to just say -- with all due respect to Chief Amos,

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and there is a lot of respect due to Chief Amos, and I feel a
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      lot of respect and gratitude for the work he's done for our
 3
      department, no doubt about that, but from my perspective,
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      there's just nobody better positioned to be successful as Fire
 5
      One than Chief Ventura.
 6
                CHAIR GINOZA:
                               Okay.
                                      Thank you, Jeff.
 7
                Does any commissioner have questions for the
      testifier?
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                COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: No questions.
                CHAIR GINOZA: All right. Seeing none, thank you.
10
11
                Cory.
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                MS. VICENS: Chair, the next testifier is Faith
13
      Chase.
              We don't have anybody else at this time for video.
14
                CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. Thank you.
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                MS. VICENS: Faith, if you would unmute and -- thank
16
      you.
17
                MS. CHASE: Aloha, Chair Ginoza. Aloha,
                      I would like to just take this opportunity to
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      Commissioners.
      express to either -- both of the candidates and the commission
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20
      that I would just really like to see the work of this new
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      chief incorporate public safety on a different elevated level
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      than has been done before. At the start of the pandemic, I
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      started to help some outreach workers with the unsheltered,
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      those living in their cars, those struggling with safe
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      housing, and it's been a real fiasco. I have -- I have
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reached out to the Maui Police Department Community Policing,
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      the mayor's office, MEMA, Mr. Andaya, Red Cross to no avail.
 3
      And so I would just -- just want to take this opportunity,
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      this agendized item, to express my desperate plea to make sure
 5
      that public safety in these areas and this sector are
 6
      really -- really given some special attention.
                                                      That's all I
 7
      wanted to share today. Thank you.
 8
                CHAIR GINOZA:
                               Thank you, Faith.
 9
                Do any commissioners have questions for the
      testifier?
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                COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: No questions.
12
                COMMISSIONER BURNS: No questions.
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                CHAIR GINOZA: All right. Seeing none, Cory, who --
      who is the one for phone interview, or could you just go on to
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15
      the phone interviews if nobody else is signed up for the --
      via the web?
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17
                MS. VICENS: Chair, the -- we do have a couple more
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      that have come through.
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                CHAIR GINOZA: Oh, okay.
20
                MS. VICENS: We have faith, who just testified.
                                                                  And
21
      we now have Kris Sakamoto, to be followed by Mike Werner.
                CHAIR GINOZA: Kris? Kris, can you unmute yourself
22
23
      and --
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                MR. SAKAMOTO: -- you guys can hear me.
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                CHAIR GINOZA:
                               Okay, yes.
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1 MR. SAKAMOTO: Hello. 2 CHAIR GINOZA: Go ahead. Yes, go ahead. Go ahead, 3 Kris. 4 MR. SAKAMOTO: Okay. My video, I don't know, I 5 cannot get 'em going. 6 CHAIR GINOZA: That's okay. 7 MR. SAKAMOTO: Sorry about that. Good morning, fire commission members and Chair Ginoza. My name is Kris 8 9 Sakamoto. I'm a battalion chief with the Maui Fire Department, and I serve in the second battalion. Today I'm 10 11 here to show my support for Chief Ventura for the position of 12 fire chief. Having been part of, you know, interview 13 committees for promotional -- the promotional process and entrance interviews, I know that interview just shows a --14 15 showcases a small part of the candidates and for me, knowing the person's values, their work ethic, what they've done in 16 17 their careers helps a lot to make the good decisions and the right candidate for the position. So I hope to give you a 18 little insight on Chief Ventura. 19 20 I was fortunate to have worked with him for a good 21 portion of my career, the same company, within the same 22 station, and I can say that he's always been an exceptional 23 member of our department who represents not only the 24 department but our profession well. He's the type of

firefighter that everybody wants on their crew, the type

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captains look for, hope that they get that kind of personnel
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      on their crew. And as a captain, he also led his crews really
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      well, and it's the same thing; people wanted to be on his crew
      and work for him. I think a lot has to do with his work
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 5
      ethic, his dedication, and integrity that has allowed him to
 6
      be successful, and he also has that personality that always
 7
      makes you feel welcome. And like Chief Giesea said, we all
      knew early on that he had what it -- what it takes to be fire
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 9
      chief and a really good one.
                CHAIR GINOZA: One minute.
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11
                MR. SAKAMOTO: So today, I humbly ask for your
      highest consideration for him for the position of fire chief.
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      Thank you.
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                CHAIR GINOZA:
                               Thank you, Kris.
15
                Any commissioner have any questions for the
      testifier?
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                COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: No questions.
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                CHAIR GINOZA: All right. Seeing none, thank you,
      Kris.
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20
                Cory.
                MS. VICENS: Chair, the next testify -- the next
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      person to testify is Mr. Mike Werner, followed by Zhantell or
22
23
      Hanale Lindo.
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                Mr. Werner, if you would unmute video and your mic,
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      we're ready for your testimony. Mahalo.
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MR. WERNER: Okay. Good morning. Can you hear me?
CHAIR GINOZA: Yes. Go ahead.

MR. WERNER: Okay. Good morning and aloha, Chair and Commissioners. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony this morning on this very important decision you folks have to make. I am Assistant Fire Chief Mike Werner, and I would like to recommend Acting Fire Chief Brad Ventura for the position of fire chief. I've been working directly with Fire Chief Ventura for the last two years, and I'm very confident in his ability to run this department. I'm confident in his ability to direct it and take it into the future. There's a lot of changes throughout that need to be made, and he's a visionary, he's somebody who can execute, and I just really believe that he will do a great job. During the last two years, you know, I've had a chance to see how he operates. He's competent, he's driven, and he really cares about his brothers and sisters in this department, and he cares about everybody who lives on this island and everybody who visits this island and, yeah, lives in Maui and, I mean, Molokai and Lanai as well. And he's been doing the job, and he does a great job. I've worked with him on the last two annual budgets and to put together a \$48 million budget and present it, I know you folks have seen him present it to you, and he presents it to the council, and then he defends it. And then, most importantly, he executes it, and managing that

2.4

\$48 million budget is -- it's a challenge. There's so much that goes into that. And then you have the mayor come or somebody from the ninth floor telling you to cut 10 percent of that, I've watched him carefully analyze what each one of those cuts was going to do to the department, how it was gonna affect the department, how it was gonna affect the community as well.

We got handed the pandemic early on when I became assistant chief, and from the moment that we started dealing with it, our go-to guy has been Chief Ventura. You can't even imagine the amount of different information that has come through to us that we've had to learn about this new thing and -- and figure out how to best protect our guys, how to -- and how to best protect the community and how to just decipher all of this information, and he's the one who put it all together and constantly monitors it and like I said, he's just -- he's been the go-to guy as far as that goes.

He's built a lot of very important relationships.

You know, I've watched different chiefs through the past, you know, in council meetings and how they interacted with each other, and he recognizes, you know, how important it is to work with the community, with the community leaders, with the mayor, with the different unions. We work with three different unions that you've got to understand completely.

CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. Thank you. Your three minutes

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1
      are up.
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                MR. WERNER: Oh, sorry. Sorry, I didn't hear the
 3
      bell.
                CHAIR GINOZA: No problem.
 4
                Okay. Does any commissioner have questions for the
 5
 6
      testifier?
 7
                COMMISSIONER BURNS: No questions.
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                VICE CHAIR VARES: No questions.
 9
                COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: No questions.
                CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. Seeing none, thank you, Mike.
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11
                Cory, who is the next testifier?
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                MS. VICENS: Chair, the next testifier is Zhantell
      Lindo.
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                Ms. Lindo, if you would -- thank you very much.
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                MS. LINDO: Aloha, Commissioners, and thank you so
      much for this opportunity. In full disclosure, I would just
16
      like to state that I am the wife of Battalion Chief Hanale
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18
      Lindo, and I also am an aide for Councilmember Vice Chair
      Rawlins-Fernandez, the budget chair of Maui County, and the
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20
      Molokai Community Outreach Specialist for the County of Maui.
21
      So I just want to have full disclosure about that.
22
                And so being in all those roles and titles, I have
23
      had the awesome experience of seeing both the fire department
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      in their communication and partnerships with our community in
25
      Molokai, as well as experience what it takes and what it looks
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like to have to develop budgets that run the entire department. So I want to make clear that I'm not here to -- for the sake of my husband and my boss to stand up and voice out my opinion of who you should choose. I think I just want to offer some insight from the experiences that I've had.

Molokai is a very unique community, and it needs leadership that can bring people together. We have long been seen as the entitled community full of bullies and everybody trying to, you know, force things in or out to make sure that we get what we want. I think the truth about Molokai is we work very well with people who have genuine aloha and concern for us and for (inaudible) things and is able to lift up our people in a way that can take leadership positions instead of be dictated by them.

I also think on the budget side that what is crucial and what I'd like you to think about is anybody can develop a great program or a great administrative plan, but what I've seen in my role with the budget chair of the council is that it takes a very special kind of person to support the standard of excellence that you need in those departments that can not just look great on paper, but function great in our community and serve the purpose while at the same time is able to creatively and efficiently be fiscally responsible. So we can say all we want about great programs and every -- I mean, if the sky was the limit, every single one of our departments

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would be the best in the nation. But the truth is that we
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 2
      look (inaudible) we've got to do more plus also have the
 3
      leader we're looking for and that I think we should deliberate
 4
      about is who is the best person that can bring people
 5
      together, take us into the future of technology in an
 6
      open-minded, encompassing way while still having core unreal
 7
      aloha values, and at the same time help our county to be
 8
      fiscally responsible while still performing in the best way
 9
      possible. So I'm hoping that those are all the things that we
      can take.
10
11
                And then I would -- just as I'm Hawaiian -- sorry.
12
                               Thank you, Zhantell. I need to cut
                CHAIR GINOZA:
13
      you off.
14
                MS. LINDO: Okay. Thank you.
15
                CHAIR GINOZA: Does any commissioner have any
16
      questions for the testifier?
17
                COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Chair, I'm just not quite
      sure who she --
18
                CHAIR GINOZA: Yeah, who she endorsed.
19
20
                Zhantell, do you have a preference for one of the
      candidates or --
21
22
                           Okay. Sure. I was trying to be fair
                MS. LINDO:
23
      just 'cause of the roles of my husband and my boss, but on a
2.4
      personal note, my full support is for Chief Brad Ventura.
25
                               Okay.
                CHAIR GINOZA:
                                      Thank you.
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Any questions from -- from members for the
 1
      testifier?
 2
 3
                COMMISSIONER BURNS: No questions.
 4
                COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Nothing here.
 5
                CHAIR GINOZA: All right. Seeing none, thank you,
 6
      Zhantell.
 7
                Cory?
                MS. VICENS: Chair, the next testifier is Ms.
 8
 9
      Jennifer Oana, to be followed by Moana Lutey.
                Ms. Oana, if you would unmute your mic and video to
10
11
      provide your testimony. Mahalo.
12
                CHAIR GINOZA: Jen, we can't hear you.
13
                MS. OANA: I'm so sorry. Is it still my turn?
14
      accidentally hung up.
                CHAIR GINOZA: Yes. Go ahead.
15
                           Thank you. Good morning, Commissioners.
16
                MS. OANA:
      My name is Jennifer Oana. Although I'm a county attorney, I
17
18
      am taking vacation to testify this morning, and I'm testifying
      as an individual.
19
20
                I strongly support Brad Ventura to become the next
21
      fire and public safety chief for the County of Maui. I am
22
      assigned as the department's deputy corporation counsel, so I
23
      am very familiar with some of the work that Deputy Chief
2.4
      Ventura does. A fire and public safety chief must know much
25
      more than putting out fires and saving people in the ocean.
                                                                    Α
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good chief has to know about the department's budget, has to
 1
 2
      know about the operations of the department, has to know who
 3
      to talk to to get what the department needs, has to see the
 4
      future of the department to plan next steps, and then
 5
      implement them, has to understand personnel issues, ADA
 6
      issues, contracting and procurement, land acquisition, rights
 7
      of entry and easement, and right now how to deal with all the
 8
      COVID issues. Deputy Chief Ventura is the person to
 9
      (inaudible) -- pleasure to work with him, and there's that old
      saying that I think is appropriate here, the right man for the
10
11
      job is already on the job. So I strongly support Brad Ventura
12
      to become the next fire and public safety chief for the County
13
      of Maui. Thank you for your time, and I'm available to answer
14
      any questions you may have.
15
                CHAIR GINOZA:
                               Thank you, Jennifer.
16
                Any questions for --
17
                COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: No.
18
                CHAIR GINOZA: Okay.
                                      Thank you.
                                                  And, sorry,
      there's a beeping sound in our commission room, but we'll just
19
      continue because we can hear the testifier.
20
21
                Cory.
22
                             Chair, the next testifier is Ms. Moana
                MS. VICENS:
23
      Lutey. She is on camera already.
2.4
                We're ready for you, Moana.
25
                            Thank you. Good morning, Chair Ginoza
                MS. LUTEY:
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and Members of the Commission. My name is Moana Lutey, and I am currently the corporation counsel. I am testifying today in my personal capacity, and I am on vacation.

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I am weighing in today in support of Brad Ventura as the next fire chief because, as Jen Oana has pointed out, the right man for the job is already on the job. I have worked with Brad extensively for the last two and a half years, and before I get to what the pandemic has added to his job duties, I want to talk about how I first met him. The first time I met Brad, it was over a potentially explosive personnel matter that was very sensitive. When I first heard about that matter, I was concerned and, fortunately, Brad as well and reached out to meet. Because that matter was handled quickly and appropriately under his direction, there was no resulting litigation. A few months later, we dealt with fines from HIOSH, and we were able to negotiate those fines down significantly in large part due to the fact that there were adequate procedures put in place by Brad Ventura. recently, we have successfully defined against a civil rights commission complaint that was made against the department, and I think you've started to get sort of the theme here, which is the documentation that I'm able to get from Brad is just fantastic and that just makes my job easier. I'm an attorney, not a magician, so if I get a nice solid file, it makes my job much easier. But the other part of what happens here is that

as I brief replies and argument for various things that fire handles, I send those briefs to Brad with all of the exhibits and the direction to read it all and comment back to me, and I do this with all of my directors, but I'll tell you that he puts a lot of time and energy into going through line by line, exhibit by exhibit, and getting it back --

CHAIR GINOZA: One minute.

2.4

MS. LUTEY: -- to me so that I fully can encompass what our argument will be, and that's unique for him. A lot of people don't do that, but it helps in our defense. So in terms of his ability to understand liability, he has taken very little training. He's like a sponge, he absorbs everything that I have explained to him, but he also understands the nuances of it, which just really buffers our department, the fire department specifically, in terms of liability. And so I think that when we look at him as a client, he's just ideal. I don't have to sort of drag him along kicking and screaming to get ahead of things; he does that himself.

I'll move to the pandemic. You may not know, but last year when the pandemic was first at its peak, Brad went out proactively to find housing and funding to get firefighters that were in more cramped quarters into different housing.

CHAIR GINOZA: Excuse me, Moana. Your three minutes

1	are up.
2	MS. LUTEY: Okay. Can I just do one line?
3	CHAIR GINOZA: Sure.
4	MS. LUTEY: I just hope that I've been able to
5	impress upon you why Brad is uniquely qualified to be chief.
6	CHAIR GINOZA: Thank you, Moana.
7	Does any commissioner have any questions?
8	COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: No questions.
9	CHAIR GINOZA: No questions. Thank you, Moana.
10	Cory?
11	MS. VICENS: Chair, at this time, we have no other
12	video testifier. We do have two callers, and we can start
13	with caller ending in the last four digits 5434.
14	If you will unmute your phone line, we're ready for
15	your testimony. Thank you. And identify yourself.
16	MR. McAFEE: I'm not sure where I would see those
17	numbers if it's my turn. This is Kevin McAfee.
18	MS. VICENS: Thank you, Kevin. We're ready for your
19	testimony.
20	MR. McAFEE: Okay. Number 5434.
21	Again, thank you for giving me the opportunity to
22	speak in support of Amos Lonokailua-Hewett. He's the
23	candidate that I recommend for the position of fire chief.
24	And some full disclosure here as well, there's not a
25	firefighter or lifeguard in this county that I don't like.

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Both candidates, in fact, are my friends; however, I hope your reasons for the selection of fire chief have less to do with how much they're liked and more to do with their knowledge, skills, and abilities to manage and lead as the chief officer. I'm Kevin McAfee. I retired from the Maui Fire Department in June of 2019 as a battalion chief for ocean safety with over 25 years of service. Prior to this career, I served in the marine corps. So with over 30 years in uniform, I've been exposed to, worked with a variety of management and leadership styles, some good, some really good like Amos.

Whomever you select needs to at least professionally manage the department; that's the basic job you're trying to There are several managers within Maui Fire Department fill. that can do management, but good management alone is not The chief needs to bring leadership. Now, there's a difference between management and leadership, and to keep it simple, my friend and fellow firefighter Vernon Patel put it this way: You manage things, but you lead and inspire people. Leadership's kind of an elusive idea, it's either there or it's not. To be honest, Maui Fire could probably function with just good management alone; we've been there, but it does fall short of inspiring people, and I've seen it. We've also seen Amos come to the front as training captain and take Maui Fire from a good fire department to arguably the best fire department in Hawaii. They came to us. His management skills

1 and leadership made that happen. 2 And by the way, Amos was only a captain when he 3 started to act like a chief officer and develop the Maui Fire 4 Department through the training programs that he brought to 5 us. As has been mentioned a couple of times this morning --6 Sir? Did you say something? 7 CHAIR GINOZA: Oh, one more minute. 8 MR. McAFEE: Copy. Thank you. 9 In closing, my recommendation to fire chief position is Amos Lonokailua-Hewett. His management abilities and 10 11 leadership style has been tested administratively and 12 operationally. Amos -- Amos is more than capable for the 13 position. I'm confident that Chief Amos will work tirelessly for the Maui Fire and the Maui community if selected. 14 15 you very much. 16 CHAIR GINOZA: Thank you, Kevin. Does any commissioner have any questions for the 17 18 testifier? 19 COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: No questions. 20 COMMISSIONER BURNS: No questions. 21 CHAIR GINOZA: All right. Seeing none, thank you. 22 Cory. 23 MS. VICENS: Chair, we have another caller who has 2.4 not identified themselves, but the last four digits we have is 25 4443.

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Caller, if you would like to testify, please unmute
 1
 2
      your audio. We're ready for your testimony.
 3
                             Those are the last four digits of my
                MR. McAFEE:
 4
      phone.
             This is Kevin McAfee. I've already testified.
 5
                             Thank you, Kevin.
                MS. VICENS:
 6
                Chair, it appears that we have no more testifiers.
 7
                CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. This is -- sorry.
 8
                (Inaudible.)
 9
                COMMISSIONER ANDRION: Madam Secretary, it looks
      like we have --
10
11
                MS. VICENS: Chair, we have one more testifier, Ms.
12
      Keani Rawlins-Fernandez would like to testify.
13
                CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. Go ahead, Councilmember.
                MS. RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha, Commissioners.
14
                                                                Μv
15
      name is Keani Rawlins-Fernandez. I am the council member from
      Molokai, and I also serve as the council's budget committee
16
      chair. I wanted to testify in support of acting Chief Brad
17
18
      Ventura, and I wanted to cite two examples to support my
19
      reasons for my position.
20
                So, first, as the Molokai council member, we have
21
      been working on relocating the Pukoo Fire Station for a number
22
      of years, and it has been such a challenge because the east
23
      side of Molokai has so many culturally sensitive areas. And
2.4
      in 2019, they chose one area, and the community was divided
25
      about whether to relocate to that location or not; and Chief
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2.4

Ventura flew to Molokai right away for several meetings with the community to discuss the concerns and to discuss potential solutions, and he worked with us and was patient with the community to find a solution that would be amenable to everyone. And we have found that solution, and we've been working very hard on the new location that we'll be relocating the Pukoo Fire Station.

The second reason in this short time is as the budget chair, I run budget sessions every year, and this past year, former Chief Thyne had acting Chief Ventura take lead of the department's budget presentation, and Chief Ventura answered questions competently, fully, honestly, and it was — he made it as painless as possible. Anyone who follows budget knows how excruciating it can be, but it's — it's really been a pleasure to work with Chief Ventura, and I hope to continue working with him to serve our community and to fund the department's needs as well as work on any kind of potential structural changes and opportunities to improve the department. Mahalo.

CHAIR GINOZA: Thank you, Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez.

Does any commissioner have any questions for the council member?

COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: (Gesturing.)

CHAIR GINOZA: Yes, Gregg.

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COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: I thank you, Councilmember,
 1
 2
      for joining us today and your testimony. And you could just
 3
      clarify, were you testifying on behalf of yourself as an
      individual or on behalf of your professional career?
 4
 5
                MS. RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Well, I'm not testifying on
      behalf of the council, for sure, so I guess as the council
 6
 7
      member for Molokai.
 8
                COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Okay, great. Thank you for
 9
      the clarity.
10
                CHAIR GINOZA:
                               Thank you.
11
                Any other questions for the testifier?
12
                (No response.)
13
                CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. Seeing none, thank you,
      Councilmember Rawlins Fernandez.
14
15
                MS. RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo nui.
16
                CHAIR GINOZA: Cory, do we have anybody else who
17
      wishes to -- signed up who wishes to testify?
18
                MS. VICENS: Chair, we have no more testifiers at
      this time.
19
20
                CHAIR GINOZA: All right. Thank you. I would like
21
      to close public testimony for today and move on to interviews
22
      for the two candidates that we have for fire chief. As was on
23
      the agenda, we anticipate executive session, a closed
2.4
      interview session, so I'd like to see if we could have a
25
      motion to move pursuant to HRS 92.5(a)2 to have executive
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session for the interviews.
 1
 2
                COMMISSIONER ANDRION: So moved, Chair. This is
 3
      Dylan.
 4
                CHAIR GINOZA: Okay.
                                      Thank you, Dylan.
 5
                Do I have a second?
 6
                COMMISSIONER BURNS:
                                     Second.
 7
                CHAIR GINOZA: Second, Dwight. Thank you.
 8
                So I'll just go down the line for -- see if we all
 9
             So Vice Chair Vares.
      agree.
10
                VICE CHAIR VARES: I agree.
11
                CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. Gregg Lundberg.
12
                COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Agree.
13
                CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. Dwight Burns.
14
                COMMISSIONER BURNS: Agree.
15
                CHAIR GINOZA: Donna Sterling.
                COMMISSIONER STERLING: (Inaudible.)
16
17
                CHAIR GINOZA: I saw her say agree.
18
                Max Kincaid, Jr. Max, agree?
19
                COMMISSIONER KINCAID: Agree.
20
                CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. And Dylan Andrion.
21
                COMMISSIONER ANDRION: Yes, agree.
22
                CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. So we will have an executive
23
      session to go over interviews for the candidates. It is 9:05
2.4
      a.m., and we will recess the meeting until 10:00 a.m., when we
25
      will have executive session to have the interview for Mr. Amos
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Lonokailua-Hewett.
 1
 2
                Commissioners, could you arrive a few minutes early,
 3
      like five or ten minutes early, so that we can ensure that we
 4
      have everything set up for when Amos arrives for his -- for
 5
      his --
 6
                Oh, Cory.
 7
                MS. VICENS: Aloha, Chair. We will be bringing
      the -- those who are remote as those in the conference room
 8
 9
      into an executive session ourselves. So, Members, you don't
      need to log into anything else. Ms. Sterling, Mr. --
10
11
      Commissioner Andrion, as well as Max, we will be bringing you
12
      into the room directly, and so hold on.
13
                CHAIR GINOZA: Thank you, Cory.
14
                Donna, do you have a question?
15
                COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Donna, you're still muted.
16
                CHAIR GINOZA: You're still muted, Donna.
17
                COMMISSIONER STERLING: How's that? How's that,
      Chair?
18
19
                CHAIR GINOZA: Yes. Okay. We can hear you.
20
                COMMISSIONER STERLING: So thank you. I'm gonna
21
      leave Kihei now and get to the room that everyone is speaking
22
      from, so I'll be there a little early.
23
                CHAIR GINOZA: Okay.
24
                COMMISSIONER STERLING: That's all, Chair.
                                                             Thank
25
      you.
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1	CHAIR GINOZA: Thank you.
2	Does any other commissioner have any questions or
3	or, Cory, do you have a question?
4	MS. VICENS: So I just wanted to confirm the remote.
5	The participants who will be remote are Commissioner Andrion
6	and Commissioner Max? Do I have that correct?
7	CHAIR GINOZA: And Punahele as well.
8	MS. VICENS: Has she joined, Chair?
9	CHAIR GINOZA: She hasn't joined yet, but she will
10	join, so there will be three commissioners who will call in
11	remotely.
12	MS. VICENS: Okay. Thank you.
13	CHAIR GINOZA: Thank you. Okay. No other comments?
14	The meeting will the fire and public safety commission
15	meeting is in recess at 9:08 a.m., reconvening at 10:00 a.m.
16	(Pause in Proceedings: 9:08 a.m2:30 p.m.)
17	CHAIR GINOZA: Good afternoon, everyone. It is 2:30
18	in the afternoon on September 15th. I'd like to reconvene in
19	open session for the Maui Fire and Public Safety Commission.
20	My name is Kyle Ginoza. And let me do a roll call of
21	everybody present at the meeting.
22	Vice Chair Lisa Vares.
23	VICE CHAIR VARES: Present.
24	CHAIR GINOZA: Gregg Lundberg.
25	COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Present.

1	CHAIR GINOZA: Dwight Burns.
2	COMMISSIONER BURNS: Present.
3	CHAIR GINOZA: Donna Sterling.
4	COMMISSIONER STERLING: Here.
5	CHAIR GINOZA: Punahele Alcon.
6	COMMISSIONER ALCON: Present.
7	CHAIR GINOZA: Max Kincaid, Jr. Max, are you there?
8	(No response.)
9	CHAIR GINOZA: Dylan Andrion. You're on mute.
10	COMMISSIONER ANDRION: Present, Chair. Mahalo.
11	CHAIR GINOZA: Max, are you there?
12	COMMISSIONER ALCON: He's there. He's on mute,
13	though, I think.
14	CHAIR GINOZA: Oh. Max, can you get off mute and
15	acknowledge?
16	COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Yeah, he's on. He's
17	COMMISSIONER KINCAID: Okay.
18	CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. Thank you. So we have eight
19	members of the fire commission present.
20	So let's move on to the on the we're on agenda
21	item appointment of the fire chief. Could I have a motion
22	COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Mr. Chair, can I make a
23	motion?
24	CHAIR GINOZA: Oh, sure, Gregg.
25	COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: I make a motion that we

2	into open session for discussion.
3	CHAIR GINOZA: Thank you. Do I have a second?
4	COMMISSIONER BURNS: Second.
5	VICE CHAIR VARES: Second.
6	CHAIR GINOZA: Second by Dwight. Motion by Gregg,
7	second by Dwight. So, discussion? So, Gregg, so we have an
8	open motion, like to have discussion on the item. Anybody
9	have any comments they'd like to share?
10	COMMISSIONER ANDRION: (Inaudible.)
11	CHAIR GINOZA: Dylan, you're on mute.
12	COMMISSIONER ANDRION: Commissioner Lundberg, are
13	you asking that the two candidates join us for a discussion
14	right now or that we're we're discussing their names for
15	selection?
16	CHAIR GINOZA: No, we're just asking for he's
17	just putting the two names for discussion, and we're
18	COMMISSIONER ANDRION: Okay.
19	CHAIR GINOZA: And we're gonna vote from there which
20	of the two names each commissioner would will select.
21	COMMISSIONER ANDRION: Perfect. Thank you, Chair.
22	MR. MURAI: We should probably restate the motion
23	just to make it clear. I believe, Mr. Chair, that the motion
24	as posed by Commissioner Lundberg is to advance the names of
25	the two applicants for consideration to be selected as chief.

And so upon full -- upon that vote, after the commissioners 1 2 have had a chance to discuss the matter, one of the two will 3 be selected. 4 Is that correct, Commissioner Lundberg? COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Yes. 5 6 MR. MURAI: Thank you. 7 COMMISSIONER BURNS: Yes. MR. MURAI: So the discussion will be on both 8 9 candidates. CHAIR GINOZA: Correct. So commissioners now have 10 11 the opportunity to provide any comments on either of the 12 candidates if they so wish. VICE CHAIR VARES: Chair. 13 CHAIR GINOZA: Yes, Vice Chair Vares. 14 15 VICE CHAIR VARES: When we started this process, I believe it was back in May, we opened up discussion regarding 16 any of the candidates even before they were -- before they 17 were actually put themselves forth as candidates to talk to 18 any firefighters, ocean safety members, members of the 19 20 community, and we've spent hours talking to the public, 21 talking to the firefighters themselves, getting a feel for 22 what the community wants in their -- in their chief. And the

two candidates that we ended up on provided excellent

information, lots and lots of resources, were wide open to

discussion, and to provide whatever they wanted for us.

23

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this process has been much, much longer than just today's public testimony, last Wednesday's public testimony, and today's two-hour interviews with each candidate.

But that being said, I don't need any more

2.4

discussion, I think I've made my decision. I'll leave it to the rest. Anybody else?

CHAIR GINOZA: Does any other commissioner have any desire to provide comment?

COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Mr. Chair, I'm ready to make the decision whenever you are.

CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. So I -- seeing no request to provide additional comment, I'm just gonna do a roll call vote.

COMMISSIONER ANDRION: Mr. Chair.

CHAIR GINOZA: Go ahead.

just wanted to take the opportunity, and I know I share this on behalf of the entire commission, to thank the public who have spent time and energy to provide written testimony as well as in-person testimony or virtual testimony and to encourage the public in that all those things were absolutely considered. I know for myself, and I believe on behalf of the other commissioners, all of those accounts were deliberated on and considered for our decision today. And to also thank both candidates for making their names available and being of

1	service to their community, and allowing us to be a part of
2	this decision-making process today. I feel I'm ready to make
3	the decision also, and I'm basing it on what I feel I've
4	received through the interviews today as well as all the
5	testimonies that have been submitted and what's best for the
6	department, especially in the times that we're in, in order to
7	carry it to the next level. So thank you so much, Chair.
8	CHAIR GINOZA: Thank you. And I'm sure every other
9	commissioner echoes your comments, so thank you.
10	So I'm gonna do a roll call vote, and when I call
11	your name, I'm asking that you state whether you are voting
12	for Chief Amos or Chief Brad to be appointed as fire chief.
13	Everybody clear on that?
14	COMMISSIONER STERLING: Yes.
15	CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. Vice Chair Vares.
16	VICE CHAIR VARES: Chief Brad Ventura.
17	CHAIR GINOZA: Gregg Lundberg.
18	COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Chief Brad Ventura.
19	CHAIR GINOZA: Dwight Burns.
20	COMMISSIONER BURNS: Chief Brad Ventura.
21	CHAIR GINOZA: Donna Sterling.
22	COMMISSIONER STERLING: Chief Brad Ford venture.
23	CHAIR GINOZA: Punahele Alcon.
24	COMMISSIONER ALCON: Chief Brad Ventura.
25	CHAIR GINOZA: Max Kincaid, Jr.

1	COMMISSIONER KINCAID: Chief Brad Ventura.
2	CHAIR GINOZA: Dylan Andiron.
3	COMMISSIONER ANDRION: Chief Brad Ventura.
4	MR. MURAI: Mr. Chair, so far, it appears that the
5	vote is seven in favor of Bradford Ventura and, therefore, you
6	do not need to vote unless your vote is not required.
7	CHAIR GINOZA: Okay. So congratulations, Chief
8	Bradford Ventura.
9	Thank you all for engaging in the process. We had
10	two fine finalists, and we thoroughly enjoyed participating in
11	the process, and I thank everyone for their role in the
12	process, and we look forward to continued great expectations
13	being met for the Maui Fire and Public Safety Department.
14	MR. MURAI: He needs to be sworn.
15	CHAIR GINOZA: Is there any comment? Any comment by
16	commissioners that they want to provide about the process or
17	the candidates before we adjourn?
18	COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: I'd like to say say a
19	special shout out to you, Mr. Chair, and to your Vice Chair
20	Lisa, you know, you guys did a great job keeping us aligned,
21	keeping us straightforward, and keeping us out of trouble, so
22	thank you very much.
23	VICE CHAIR VARES: Thanks, guys.
24	CHAIR GINOZA: Any other comments from
25	commissioners?

1	COMMISSIONER STERLING: Thank you, Commissioners.
2	CHAIR GINOZA: All right. Seeing none, thank you
3	very much, everyone, for your participation in the process.
4	And it is 2:40 p.m. on September 15th, and I'd like to adjourn
5	the fire and public safety meeting for today. Please,
6	everyone, have a great day. Thank you.
7	(The proceedings were adjourned at 2:40 p.m.)
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1	<u>CERTIFICATE</u>
2	STATE OF HAWAII)
3) SS. COUNTY OF MAUI)
4	
5	I, Sandra J. Gran, Certified Shorthand Reporter for
6	the State of Hawaii, hereby certify that on September 15,
7	2021, at 8:00 a.m., the proceedings were taken down by me in
8	machine shorthand and was thereafter reduced to typewritten
9	form under my supervision; that the foregoing represents, to
10	the best of my ability, a true and correct transcript of the
11	proceedings 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 11th day of October, 2021, in Maui,
18	Hawaii.
19	
20	
21	Sala de la
22	Janera V. Oro
23	Sandra J. Gran, RPR Hawaii CSR 424
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