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FIRE AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION

COUNTY OF MAUI

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

REGULAR MEETING

Held via BlueJeans, commencing at 10:01 a.m., on
March 17, 2021.

REPORTED BY: SANDRA J. GRAN, RPR/CSR #424

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ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Lisa Vares, Vice Chair
- Gregg Lundberg, Member
- Dwight Burns, Member
- Donna Sterling, Member
- Punahuele Alcon, Member
- Max Kincaid, Jr., Member
- Dylan Andrion, Member
- Makalapua Kanuha, Member

STAFF:

- Bradford Ventura, Fire Chief
- Gavin Fujioka, Deputy Fire Chief
- Hanalei Lindo, Assistant Fire Chief
- Jeffrey Giese, Assistant Fire Chief
- Uilani Gomes, Captain
- Moana Lutey, Corporation Counsel
- Graham Russell, Deputy Corporation Counsel
- Joyce Kawagawa, Commission Assistant
- Herman Andaya, Maui Emergency Management Agency

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(March 17, 2022, 10:01 a.m.)

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CHAIR VARES: Thank you, guys. Good morning, everybody. Today is March 17th, 2022, it is 10:01 a.m., and this is the monthly fire and public safety meeting. First and foremost, I wanted to make sure that we've got everybody here. Could I do a quick roll call, please? I'm Vice Chair Lisa Vares. I'll be chairing the meeting today.

Chair Kyle Ginoza is excused from today. I hope we see him, I hope he's able to pop in and out, but he's excused from the meeting today.

Could I get a quick roll call, please? Do we have Gregg Lundberg?

COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Here.

CORPORATION COUNSEL: And if each member could state whether anyone is in the room with them.

COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Gregg Lundberg here, and no, nobody else in the office.

CHAIR VARES: Thank you, Gregg.

Dwight Burns.

COMMISSIONER BURNS: Here, and nobody is with me in my office.

CHAIR VARES: Wonderful.

Donna Sterling.

COMMISSIONER STERLING: No human being is with me,

1 but my two dogs are there on the floor.

2 CHAIR VARES: Okay. Let's see.

3 Punahuele Alcon.

4 COMMISSIONER ALCON: Here. I'm alone.

5 CHAIR VARES: Wonderful. Let's see.

6 Commissioner Kanuha. Is Makalapua here?

7 COMMISSIONER KANUHA: Yes, Commissioner Kanuha here,
8 and I'm alone in my office.

9 CHAIR VARES: Thank you.

10 Commissioner Andrion. Dylan, are you here? Are we
11 Dylan-less?

12 (No response.)

13 CHAIR VARES: All right. Well, we've definitely got
14 quorum with those of us that are here. Am I missing anybody?

15 Oh, Max. Commissioner Kincaid, are you here?

16 (No response.)

17 CHAIR VARES: No. All right. Well, there's enough
18 here, yes.

19 And I wanted to remind everybody when we have to do
20 any voting, we need to state our names and whether we're
21 voting for or against whatever we're voting for just until we
22 can all get together into the same room again, if that's okay
23 with everybody.

24 Okay. Moving on, I'd like to make sure everybody
25 got the minutes from last month's meeting and if anyone has

1 any questions or comments regarding the minutes of the meeting
2 last month. Any questions from the commissioners?

3 COMMISSIONER BURNS: No questions.

4 COMMISSIONER STERLING: No.

5 CHAIR VARES: Okay. Chief Ventura, who do we have
6 today with us from your department?

7 CHIEF VENTURA: Good morning, everybody. Good to
8 see you all. Thank you for being here on this lovely spring
9 break day. In our room here today, we have myself, Deputy
10 Chief Fujioka, Assistant Chief Lindo, and on to my left here,
11 I have Captain Gomes. Also in the room, we have corporation
12 counsel Moana Lutey and from corporation counsel Graham
13 Russell with us today. And then off to the side, commission
14 assistant Joyce Nakagawa is here in place of Richelle
15 Wakamatsu today.

16 CHAIR VARES: Thank you.

17 Thank you for joining us, Joyce.

18 And from Maui Emergency Management Agency, Herman,
19 do we have you here?

20 MEMA OFFICER ANDAYA: Yes, I'm here.

21 CHAIR VARES: Okay. Why don't we move on to
22 Herman's report? Do you have something for us?

23 MEMA OFFICER ANDAYA: Yes, thank you. Madam Chair,
24 Members, Commissioners, good morning. MEMA continues to be
25 partially activated for COVID-19, so we continue to meet

1 with --

2 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Chair. Chair.

3 CHAIR VARES: Pause for one second, Herman.

4 MEMA OFFICER ANDAYA: Sure.

5 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Vice Chair, do we have to
6 approve the minutes, or did we do that already?

7 CHAIR VARES: We did not. Good catch. Could I have
8 a motion to approve the minutes from the previous February
9 meeting, please?

10 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Yeah, Chair. I move that we
11 accept the minutes of March -- of February -- what is it? --
12 17th. That's a motion. Donna Sterling.

13 CHAIR VARES: Thank you, Donna.

14 Do I have a second?

15 COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Second.

16 CHAIR VARES: Who is it seconded by? Sorry.

17 COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: This is Gregg.

18 CHAIR VARES: Thank you, Gregg. Seconded by Gregg
19 Lundberg.

20 All approve?

21 (Response.)

22 CHAIR VARES: Excellent. We've got hands raised by
23 Commissioner Burns, Commissioner Kanuha, Commissioner Alcon,
24 Commissioner Sterling, and, of course, the initial second.

25 Thanks for that catch, Donna.

1 COMMISSIONER STERLING: (Inaudible.)

2 CHAIR VARES: Herman, I'm so sorry.

3 MEMA OFFICER ANDAYA: No.

4 CHAIR VARES: Let's get back to your -- your update.

5 Thank you.

6 MEMA OFFICER ANDAYA: No problem, Madam Chair. So
7 although the numbers have dropped significantly, we will
8 remain vigilant in the event that there's another surge, and
9 so we'll continue to be in partial activation.

10 We continue to work with HIEMA, FEMA, and SBA with
11 respect to assistance for the repair of infrastructure damaged
12 during the Kona Low in December, as well as assistance in the
13 form of SBA loans to residents who were impacted by the storm
14 as well.

15 We are a little over two months away from hurricane
16 season, and so we are well underway with the preparations. We
17 will start to amplify our public messaging regarding
18 individual preparation.

19 We've scheduled our annual Preparedness Expo, and
20 that will be held at the Queen Kaahumanu Shopping Center on
21 June 4th, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We will have
22 many of our partners there, including the American Red Cross
23 and the Maui Fire Department as well.

24 We're also looking at other venues throughout the --
25 throughout the county. We were supposed to participate -- we

1 were -- we have a table at the Molokai Resource Fair this
2 weekend; however, we're having some problems getting air
3 travel to the island. Unless Fire One can provide us a ride
4 over. But, anyway, we're still trying to get over to Molokai
5 somehow for that Molokai Resource Fair. And I know there's
6 another event occurring on Lanai, and we'll be attending that
7 event as well.

8 We have also been working with our EOC partners in
9 our application to the Homeland Security Grant Program. We
10 had a meeting this past Tuesday with our partners, which
11 included Chief Ventura, to strategize what investments we
12 would prioritize for this year. A number of investments have
13 been made in the past using Homeland Security funding,
14 including a hazmat vehicle, sensors, and trainings. This is
15 especially valuable to us. For instance, with the fire
16 department, we're able to use Homeland Security funding to
17 assist in getting them to the mainland to assist with battling
18 wildfires, and this is very valuable for us because they can
19 then bring that experience back to Maui and use that same
20 experience to battle fires here. And so that's how we've been
21 using some of these monies for that. But also, we bought a
22 lot of equipment and other things for our -- for our partners,
23 including the fire department.

24 That's all I have, Madam Chair, unless there's any
25 questions from the commissioners.

1 CHAIR VARES: Thank you, Herman.

2 Do any commissioners have any questions about Mr.
3 Andaya's update for MEMA? Questions or comments at all?

4 COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: No, thanks, Chair.

5 CHAIR VARES: All right. Excellent. A couple of
6 things real fast before we move on to fire. First of all, I
7 didn't get to ask, Joyce, do you have anyone that has signed
8 up for any public testimony on any of the agenda items?

9 CHIEF VENTURA: I have Joyce off-screen, and she's
10 nodding no, no testifiers.

11 CHAIR VARES: Okay. Wonderful. Is anyone on the
12 call that did not sign up but would like to publicly testify
13 about any of our agenda items?

14 (No response.)

15 CHAIR VARES: No? All right.

16 I'd also like to acknowledge, we did get a chat
17 notification that Commissioner Andrion has joined us. He's
18 joining us via chat, but he is monitoring the entire meeting
19 live, so thank you, Commissioner Andrion.

20 Okay. Next -- thank you very much, Herman.

21 Moving on to fire department, Chief Ventura, what do
22 you and your crew have for us?

23 CHIEF VENTURA: Good morning, everybody. So in our
24 packet to you are the normal handouts that have gone out.
25 We'll look at the training, the monthly training first. The

1 concentration this month has been on our rescue boat
2 operations as well as our hazmat first responder operations.
3 That's the FRO refresher in the upper right column, and that
4 is a mandatory training that we do every year with our
5 firefighters, so that is happening last month and into this
6 month.

7 The second handout is the yellow page; that document
8 shows the -- our call volume and different types of calls for
9 the month. We're in the -- you know, these stats are through
10 February, and as you can see, things are starting to pick up.
11 In the last couple of weeks, we've noticed a constant increase
12 in daily brush fires, so the island is drying out quicker than
13 we wished it would, but our crews have been, you know, on
14 point with the fires thus far and keeping them to a minimum
15 size.

16 An additional handout that you see in this month's
17 packet is the purple one, and that is just recognizing our
18 wahine first responders. And so we are happy to put this
19 together for them and our department and our community just to
20 see what they're doing out there on Lanai, in Napili, Makawao,
21 Kihei. They're kind of spread out all over the island and in
22 the county, so we wanted to acknowledge them, being that March
23 is Women's History Month and thus will take us to our
24 presenter later in today's commission meeting. Captain Gomes
25 will have a little show for us as well.

1 So those are the handouts. As far as my report goes
2 to you, some of the, you know, continuous COVID meetings that
3 we've been having with the directors and deputies are kind of
4 on the wind-down, which we're very appreciative for. We're
5 meeting every other week right now.

6 And we're working on some issues that I brought up
7 earlier that our webmail system has been down, so people
8 haven't been able to get their email unless they were at
9 county facilities or they had special access, so that is gonna
10 be up and running here soon. That mainly affects our
11 lifeguards because our lifeguards are working out of towers.
12 They do not have a direct network connection, so they are --
13 they have been without email for several months. And so we've
14 been having to get hard copies to all the towers so -- to keep
15 them, you know, apprised of the information.

16 And then our last meeting with the mayor about a
17 week or so ago, two weeks ago almost now, was in regards to
18 this year's budget, making sure that we have all of our
19 submittals in. We talked about, you know, justifying our
20 items with him so that he could prioritize his full county
21 budget, which he'll present to the council on the 25th of next
22 week. So he's excited about that, as he stated last night.

23 Last night we attended the state of the county
24 address from the -- at the McCoy Theater, and it was -- it was
25 good to see people in person because we haven't had a lot of

1 that in the last two years.

2 Moving further down the list, you'll see my council
3 items. Senator Lynn DeCoite reached out to us, and so we will
4 also be assisting with what Director Andaya mentioned.
5 There's a Molokai Community Resource Fair, and so we'll be
6 having a firefighter tent and table set up there as well to,
7 you know, reach out to the community, see if they have any
8 needs, as well as provide information to the younger crowd as
9 far as career opportunities go. So we'll be there.

10 We continue to work on Haiku Fire Station,
11 communicating with the council member of that district.

12 And we also did a presentation for Congressman Kai
13 Kahele for a grant to potentially get a tanker replacement out
14 in Lahaina. It is one of our older tankers, it's built on a
15 foreign chassis for which parts are becoming very, very
16 difficult to get, and when we can get them, they're
17 ridiculously expensive. So we do definitely want to replace
18 that tanker, and by going for this grant, it's an opportunity
19 for us to not have to use county funds.

20 On the back page, I'll just skim over the last page
21 kind of briefly. One of the things that we've been trying to
22 do with Hawaii Volcanos National Park there at the bottom is
23 to create a statewide interoperability mutual aid plan so if
24 Maui's hit by a hurricane, we can get help from the other
25 counties. If the Big Island is hit from a big event, we can

1 go there to help them with their issue, whether it's a
2 wildfire, a hurricane, or volcano. Right now, we do it, but
3 we basically do it on kokua, and we want to create an
4 interstate interoperability mutual aid agreement where there's
5 a way to transport equipment, people, and then also recover
6 funds from incidents that were especially affected and
7 reimbursed by FEMA if they were large incidents. So we're
8 working on that.

9 Pukoo Fire Station, as we've mentioned before, is
10 gonna be probably a couple-year process here, but we are --
11 decided to do a full environmental assessment on that
12 property. And while we're doing the environmental assessment,
13 we'll be working with a contractor to do the design of the
14 remodel. So we're gonna use most of the existing structure,
15 but because it's just a single-family house and we need to put
16 radio systems in it and a new roof and such, we're gonna be
17 working with a consultant to get that project moving forward
18 here.

19 The rest of my report that I've handed out is fairly
20 self-explanatory, but if you have any questions, I can expand
21 on them.

22 CHAIR VARES: Thanks, Chief Ventura.

23 Any commissioners have any questions for the chief
24 regarding his report? None?

25 (No response.)

1 CHAIR VARES: I'm gonna check on Dylan and Donna;
2 both are out via the chat. I don't see anything currently.

3 Chief, I had a couple of questions for you. Did I
4 hear somebody else ask for a question?

5 (No response.)

6 CHAIR VARES: All right. Chief, I understand the
7 need for the master cooperative agreement with the state
8 between -- specifically between ourselves and the Big Island.
9 How does HVO -- how did the Hawaii Volcanos National Park get
10 put as the -- as the title or as the -- as the main point of
11 contact? Is that so that we can kind of interact with the
12 federal fire agencies that are usually attached with the
13 national park?

14 CHIEF VENTURA: Yeah, good question. So we
15 basically need some sort of state body who can oversee who is
16 on all islands and has the ability to reach out to all of the
17 counties and be like the umbrella over this. We hoped that it
18 could be state fire council, but state fire council doesn't
19 have the authority or the bandwidth to try to produce this
20 right now, so this is another option. So if we have a request
21 from -- well, so this is kind of a lot of back history now,
22 but we have an MOU with a Washington fire department. If they
23 need assistance, they can reach out through this MOU to get
24 assistance from us to help them. It's Kelso Fire on the
25 mainland. If that -- if we don't have an MOU with somebody,

1 then the system is basically a federal resource allocation
2 system, and we don't have that, and we're not in that system
3 being in Hawaii. Because normally, I think the intention is
4 that we're gonna receive assistance, not necessarily give
5 assistance to other state partners. But this would just be an
6 interstate within the counties, and then Hawaii Volcanos would
7 be overseeing it and managing it and coordinating it from
8 their level.

9 CHAIR VARES: That makes sense. Okay. I appreciate
10 that. Thank you.

11 And then second question: A while ago, a couple of
12 years ago, we were all discussing as a commission heading over
13 to Molokai to check out specifically the Pukoo Fire Station,
14 but we've never gotten to. And I know it's a long process to
15 get all of this worked out; committing to an environmental
16 assessment and having a contractor designing everything out is
17 also a long process. Is there any way that we could get a
18 presentation from you all just about that specific location
19 that would kind of cover everything that we were probably
20 gonna talk about at that field trip? How many -- like how
21 much public is it able to assist? How many fire employees are
22 gonna be stationed there? That kind of thing. What -- if
23 it's going to be expanded, what -- we kind of don't know.
24 Would you all be able to present something like that to us
25 sometime soon?

1 CHIEF VENTURA: Yeah, of course. Would you want any
2 information on the current site that they're located at, or
3 are you just more concerned about what does the future look
4 like?

5 CHAIR VARES: Can we get both?

6 CHIEF VENTURA: Sure. Okay.

7 CHAIR VARES: Thanks. Sorry. Just what are they
8 at, and what are they moving to.

9 CHIEF VENTURA: Okay. Can do.

10 CHAIR VARES: Sorry.

11 CHIEF VENTURA: And we are still kind of in limbo as
12 far as the site inspections go. I'm not sure if you guys have
13 had communication on your end to set up a calendar and set up
14 various sites, but as Dan had mentioned, if we kept it small
15 and the meetings didn't -- or the station visits didn't meet
16 our quorum, that you guys could do various station visits
17 throughout the county. And I would be happy to, you know,
18 tour along or make sure somebody's there as a representative
19 to be with you all on those tours. I'm not sure where we are
20 on the station visits, but we totally support it for you all.

21 CHAIR VARES: Thank you. I'm sure we're all looking
22 forward to that again, but until then, we'd love to maybe just
23 get one of your really nice organized breakdowns of what we're
24 looking at. Okay, thanks.

25 If that's everything with you, Chief, do you have

1 Assistant Chief Fujioka's report for us?

2 DEPUTY CHIEF FUJIOKA: Good morning, Commissioners.

3 CHAIR VARES: Good morning.

4 DEPUTY CHIEF FUJIOKA: I'll cover my report briefly
5 here. So as you all know, we've been really busy with
6 promotions ever since we took office here, so the last month,
7 we conducted a bunch of promotions for captains and
8 firefighter 3s. We promoted eight captains. Their names are
9 listed in our printout for you guys. And then we just
10 promoted 13 drivers or firefighter 3s effective yesterday.

11 Ocean safety interviews were finished last week.
12 The names of the promoted personnel would be in our next
13 commission report. We're working together on getting an ocean
14 safety officer 1 recruit class going in the next month or so,
15 month or two, and we also are preparing for our next -- our
16 firefighter 2 promotions, which will be coming up shortly.

17 Department improvement committees, we just had put
18 out a -- I guess a website to our members which offers online
19 recovery meetings for alcohol and substance abuse for anybody,
20 any members or I guess it could be maybe family members. I'm
21 not sure if it's family also. But that's like you don't have
22 to identify yourself, and it's offered a couple times a week.

23 Moving on to our union interactions, we had some
24 union interactions. We had our safety committee meeting
25 with -- with the HFFA personnel. We also consulted with HFFA

1 on a couple items with our firefighter 2 testing and our
2 drivers being promoted to the bureau positions. HGEA ongoing
3 consultations for a bunch of items, and I believe they're
4 going through arbitration this week.

5 And the last thing is just a letter. We got a
6 letter from the public regarding an unstable resident in Haiku
7 who has been known to light fires out there. So Chief Brad
8 had talked to the representative from the mayor's office, and
9 basically, we offered our assistance if we can help in any
10 way, but we all know that's kind of an MPD situation.

11 So that's all I have for my report. If you guys got
12 any questions, I'll be glad to answer.

13 CHAIR VARES: Thanks, Chief Fujioka. Do any
14 commissioners have any questions?

15 (No response.)

16 CHAIR VARES: No? All right. Wonderful. Thank
17 you.

18 Moving on to Chief Lindo.

19 ASSISTANT CHIEF LINDO: Good morning, Madam Chair,
20 Commissioners. Good to see you guys. My report should be
21 right in front of you guys. It's real basic and simple. I
22 mean, you see the major incident summaries dealing with fire
23 and ocean safety, and it may seem like just stats on a page,
24 yeah, but operationally, when I'm looking at something like
25 this, it's really taking a look at what's happening. And like

1 Chief Brad told you guys a little bit earlier, as things are
2 starting to get dry, we're starting to see a rash of fires, so
3 we started to look at what do we need to train on knowing that
4 we're going into brush fire season so lining up the training
5 with these statistics. Looking at structure fires, a simple
6 structure fire is already doing the right things
7 operationally. Do we -- do we have the right resource? Do we
8 have the right capabilities and equipment, and personnel to
9 make it happen? So those are the things that we're working on
10 aligning. So when we look at that, some of the things that we
11 were able to do right now is not only meet our engine guys
12 who's online, but we have a hazmat team, we have a rescue
13 team, so making sure that they have the right equipment. So
14 we have ordered equipment for hazmat and dive computers, and
15 swift water equipment. You saw what happened in December with
16 the huge amount of rain, so we want to make sure that we're
17 providing the right equipment and training for our personnel
18 for those kinds of things.

19 Something that's coming up is we're absolutely in
20 the business of making relationships (inaudible). We're
21 community-driven, and for me, relationships is huge. So we
22 have an opportunity, we've got a meeting with our county
23 public works and to really reestablish some of the -- the
24 relationships, especially when we're dealing with emergency
25 response, yeah. On Molokai, county public works, I mean,

1 they're one of the first guys we call, so really utilizing the
2 best that we possibly can, especially we're part of the same
3 organizations in the county, so that's what we're looking at.

4 Ongoing projects, we continue to work on the SOGs.

5 Apparatus, the Battalion 1 BC vehicle is online.

6 You guys might have seen it. It's a beautiful yellow Ford
7 F250 with black on the back. It's pretty cool. So we have
8 that online. Utility 4, the new Utility 4 finally made it to
9 Molokai, so it's sitting at the station washed clean, and
10 we're just waiting to get all of the paperwork and everything
11 documented and ready to go. The new Engine 2 is -- it's on
12 island, it's gonna be picked up tomorrow, so we hope to see
13 that online in a couple of days or weeks.

14 In the training bureau, recruit class, we have none
15 right now, but we're starting to begin the process of moving
16 that forward so we can hopefully start a new recruit class by
17 the beginning of the new fiscal year. Incumbent training is
18 absolutely important, so we want to make sure we're delivering
19 the right stuff. That's what's happening in our training
20 bureau.

21 Ocean safety, you guys know Assistant Chief Giese
22 was BC7 for all this time, so it's really giving back to Ocean
23 Safety and allowing them to grow. Like us guys who rope, it's
24 giving the horse its reins, so giving -- giving the head back
25 to them, so they're able to do the things instead of us doing

1 it, and we can just oversee. So it's really bridging all of
2 those things and seeing what's coming out of that. So that's
3 all I've got for ocean safety. I'm sure Chief Giesease can add
4 on anything to that.

5 You guys have any questions?

6 CHAIR VARES: Thank you, Chief Lindo.

7 Does -- do any commissioners have any questions?

8 (No response.)

9 CHAIR VARES: No? All right. Thanks so much for
10 that presentation.

11 Chief Giesease, you're up.

12 ASSISTANT CHIEF GIESEASE: Okay. Can everybody hear
13 me okay?

14 CHAIR VARES: (Nodding head.)

15 ASSISTANT CHIEF GIESEASE: All right. So I can start
16 by just expanding a bit on some of the items Chief Lindo
17 mentioned. So on the ocean safety front, we also just made
18 some promotions there, which does not happen as often in ocean
19 safety as it does in fire. So we recently promoted two new
20 captains and three new lieutenants. We also are preparing for
21 our recruit class that's going to be starting. April 1st is
22 our target date for that, which is exciting, and we hope to
23 follow that with another recruit class to fill all the
24 remaining vacancies. So, in addition to just that transition
25 of leadership back to ocean safety personnel, still lots of

1 good things are in the works there.

2 On the training front, it's on the -- it's listed on
3 the paper there, but I can expand a little on that program
4 director -- we called it program director workshop. So this
5 is something that I think is kind of a significant step
6 forward for our training bureau that we put on recently, and I
7 was involved in that just because I'm -- I have been our
8 instructor trainer for the last many years. So we have a
9 system in Maui Fire we call the cadre system, which, if you're
10 not familiar with that term, it basically just means a group
11 of instructors. So instead of our training bureau, which is
12 really three or four personnel, depending on the timing,
13 trying to basically conduct and orchestrate all of the
14 training, which is effectively impossible if you're gonna
15 deliver a large volume of high-quality training, what we've
16 done instead is for the past many years we've developed these
17 cadres of instructors. So it'll be a group of people who have
18 a special interest in a particular subset of things that we
19 do. It could be rope rescue, ocean rescue, incident command
20 system, hazmat, you name it, and they will go and get extra
21 training and extra expertise and become our department's
22 subject matter experts on that. So they're able to get a
23 higher level of training and expertise in their specific
24 discipline than we could hope for any one training bureau to
25 achieve, and then they put together training programs for our

1 recruits and our incumbent personnel. So what this workshop
2 was, it really was the first formal attempt to provide them,
3 our program directors who lead the cadres, to provide them
4 with the training they need in how to build a training
5 program. So essentially, we spent a whole week with a subset
6 of our program directors, and we worked with them on how to
7 identify and, more importantly, how to appropriately document
8 our job performance requirements. Right? 'Cause all your
9 training starts with what do your personnel really need to
10 know and need to be able to do out as their job, right?
11 That's the ultimate target for all your training. So we help
12 them get clear on exactly what that is and how to document
13 that appropriately per national standards and then to use that
14 to build high-quality lesson plans, including evaluations, so
15 we can be sure that our training is effective, including
16 safety planning. So we can not just be sure that our training
17 is as safe as possible but document that we've appropriately
18 addressed all the safety concerns involved in training.

19 We taught them a bit about the budget process and
20 how it works, and the sort of timelines to expect. Because if
21 you're not familiar with how to get money and spend it in the
22 county, you're not gonna be successful, right? Those of you
23 who have worked in the county know your first foray into
24 trying to procure items, you're met with quite a few surprises
25 as to how things work. So we talked them through the budget

1 process so they can more efficiently get the things that they
2 need for their training programs to be successful and talked a
3 bit about quality assurance within their programs. So it was
4 a week chock-full of stuff that was really helpful, I think,
5 for them. And we're gonna be doing it again for our remaining
6 program directors. So that was kind of a big step forward, I
7 think, for our training programs there, so -- and it went
8 well, so that's good.

9 I can go on to my specific report as Fire Four. And
10 I know I've been talking for a while, so I'll just hit the
11 highlights. So some of our inspectors attended some training
12 on, you know, how to actually put together a class for fire
13 inspectors, so they're rebuilding our in-house fire inspector
14 training program, so that was good.

15 This MAPPS program, you can see, if you go all the
16 way down to training there, this is a countywide project.
17 It's really a huge project. MAPPS stands for Maui's Automated
18 Planning and Permitting System, so it's basically a new
19 software system for submitting, processing, and tracking
20 applications for permits and plans and some business licenses
21 and such, and it's -- multiple county departments are actually
22 using it, not just fire. You've got, you know, the building
23 department and quite a few others, so it's a major project.
24 Our fire prevention bureau has been one of the lead agencies
25 in developing the specifics of how that's gonna work and

1 undergoing training, and that's gonna be a big thing for them
2 over the next month or two just getting everybody trained up
3 on that, especially since they have some new personnel coming
4 their way.

5 We can -- going on to health and safety, so we do
6 have a couple of new personnel joining and a recently promoted
7 captain of water ski in the health and safety bureau, so
8 they're gonna be helping that bureau get back up and running
9 again at full speed.

10 I think I mentioned last time we had the pleasure of
11 dual HIOSH inspections, and so one of the things health and
12 safety is working on is implementing the lessons learned from
13 that. So one of our gaps there concerned our documentation
14 regarding hepatitis B vaccinations and the OSHA requirements
15 for informing, you know, workers on that, documenting that you
16 informed your employees about that, and offering vaccination.
17 So we redid our paperwork on that, that's gone out to the
18 department, so that's one of the projects we're working on as
19 well as other things having to do with exposure control. You
20 know, one of the risks to firefighters as you go out and
21 respond to medical incidents and automobile accidents and such
22 is getting -- getting stuff that belongs in someone else's
23 body inside your body, right, which is never a good idea. So,
24 you know, blood in the eye and things of that nature. So
25 we're required to develop an entire program for how we manage

1 that and respond to and prevent it and such, so that's one of
2 the main focuses there.

3 Our new SCBA tech is up and running, getting well
4 trained. He has some formal training from the manufacturer
5 coming up, so that's working out great for us. The oxygen
6 fill station, you know, we deliver oxygen to many of our
7 patients, and as you may have recalled, during the pandemic,
8 there were moments where oxygen was in short supply, you know,
9 medical oxygen. So we have a system coming in now that's
10 gonna allow us to fill our own oxygen bottles from larger
11 tanks that we get from a third-party vendor, so that's moving
12 along. We've got the electrical set up; the parts are
13 arriving, that's -- that's starting to happen there.

14 Let's see. And, you know, I think that's -- that's
15 kind of the -- there's the highlights right there for fire
16 prevention and health and safety. As far as budget items are
17 concerned, you can see the items there in the report. We are
18 following through on the department of transportation grant to
19 get some extrication equipment for doing -- we're on track or
20 actually a little ahead of track, maybe even considerably
21 ahead of on track for our budget this year, so that's all
22 looking good. And we'll be preparing for the fiscal year '23
23 budget questions from council, so those will be coming in a
24 month or so.

25 We did have an issue, a bit of a hiccup with respect

1 to the lifeguard towers. We ordered two new lifeguard towers,
2 one for Baldwin Beach and one for Hookipa Beach, and had some
3 issues with the contract. You know, the vendor needed to
4 change some pricing and had some concerns about contract
5 language, so we were kind of under the gun because of time
6 constraints to rework that contract, but on our end, I've
7 never seen anything move so fast, so good on Maui County. And
8 we've got an updated contract back to the vendor, and
9 hopefully, we'll be moving along with that.

10 And, yeah, I think that'll do it for my report
11 unless anybody has any questions.

12 CHAIR VARES: Thanks, Chief Giese.

13 Do any commissioners have any questions? Anybody?

14 (No response.)

15 CHAIR VARES: Nobody. All right. I've got one.
16 You mentioned that there's -- there's gonna be a new recruit
17 class for ocean safety. I don't know that I've heard too much
18 about the process of the recruit class for specifically ocean
19 safety. How long is that?

20 ASSISTANT CHIEF GIESEA: So that's something that we
21 decide each time. So traditionally, six weeks was kind of
22 standard, at least it had been. Our last recruit class that
23 we held this past fall, we expanded that to eight weeks. And
24 at the request of our ocean safety training division, this
25 next class is gonna be between nine and ten weeks. And, yeah,

1 you know, there's -- they start with, you know, you have your
2 county employee orientation training, so there's just a whole
3 lot of things you have to know or have to be taught as a
4 county employee. We go through the same emergency medical
5 training as the firefighters, so that's two weeks, sometimes a
6 little bit longer. And then there's quite a lot of, again,
7 HIOSH or OSHA compliance training they have to go through as
8 well. And then we put them through the wringer out at the
9 beach in the ocean because it's not just teaching them
10 techniques, it's getting them reps after reps after reps and,
11 you know, working with the rescue board, working with the jet
12 ski, working with fire department personnel. And we do get
13 them trained to be not jet ski operators, that's a longer
14 class in itself, that's a -- for us, that's a four-week class
15 just for operating the jet ski, but we give them orientation
16 for that. And we teach them how to be the person on the back,
17 it's called the crew member, or the grabber is the term that
18 we usually use. That's the person on the big boogie board
19 that trails the ski that actually helps get the patient onto
20 the ski. So there's a fair amount of training that goes into
21 that. And, again, it's not just how to do it, but getting
22 enough application, enough repetition so that when they
23 graduate recruit class, we don't have any doubt about their
24 ability to do all aspects of their job safely and effectively.
25 So that's the long answer: Short answer, nine to ten weeks.

1 CHAIR VARES: Thanks so much. Thanks for all of
2 that.

3 ASSISTANT CHIEF GIESEA: Sure.

4 CHAIR VARES: Did that bring up any other questions
5 from any other commissioners?

6 (No response.)

7 CHAIR VARES: No? All right. Speaking of other
8 commissioners, we do have Commissioner Max Kincaid also. He's
9 joined us; he's just watching us via chat, so he'll be chiming
10 in if needed just so that we can have it on record that he
11 joined us today.

12 Thank you, all of our chiefs.

13 And, gosh, we're moving on to it looks like -- I've
14 been looking forward to this one, our guest presenter. Are we
15 ready for Captain Gomes?

16 CHIEF VENTURA: Yes. I'll introduce her and let her
17 give her presentation. So I'm excited to have Captain Gomes
18 with us this morning. She's been with our department nearly
19 21 years, and she was promoted to captain in 2018 when Chief
20 Thyne and I were initially put in admin. Back in August of
21 2018. Just recently, yesterday, we had a nice fun large
22 structure fire out in Makawao, she was on duty, and she was
23 the incident commander, and she did very well. So we're happy
24 for her to be with us today. I'm gonna give her a moment to
25 say hi, and then she has prepared a video to play for you all

1 that we tried to do a dry run through earlier.

2 So, Lani, to you.

3 CAPTAIN GOMES: Aloha, Madam Chair, Commissioners,
4 and everyone else that I cannot see. My name is Uilani Gomes.
5 I'm from Haiku, Maui. I've been in the fire department for 21
6 years, and I'm a fire captain at the Makawao Fire Station. I
7 supervise a four-man crew or four-firefighter crew, and I
8 have -- our apparatus is Engine 5, and I also have a Utility
9 8, which is a wildland utility.

10 I made a quick video to just go over just daily
11 duties that I have as a captain, so that's the first third of
12 the video, the second third of the video is talking to my
13 firefighters about working with a female firefighter, and the
14 last part of the video is introducing the ladies in the fire
15 department. There are three other ladies, and they're on the
16 west side and Lanai. So I hope you enjoy the video, and here
17 we go.

18 (Playing video.)

19 (Captain Gomes on video) Aloha kakahiaka. This is
20 the morning routine. First is weather check, putting on my
21 gear on the apparatuses, checking in with the other crews on
22 other calls that they had the day before. Looking through the
23 station, see if there's any needs I can report to my battalion
24 chief. Putting in our manpower and scheduling the training
25 for this week. (Inaudible) in between going on calls and

1 cooking, cleaning, and (inaudible).

2 (Video continues without audio.)

3 CHAIR VARES: Captain Gomes, I'm not getting any
4 audio. Anybody else getting audio?

5 COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: No, I'm not either. Can you
6 hear my voice?

7 CHAIR VARES: It's coming in and out. Intermittent
8 audio.

9 COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Yeah, same here, Lisa.

10 COMMISSIONER STERLING: In and out.

11 COMMISSIONER BURNS: In and out.

12 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Yeah.

13 (Video playing with intermittent audio.)

14 CAPTAIN GOMES: So that is a quick glimpse of us
15 in -- the females in the department, and thank you for having
16 us.

17 CHAIR VARES: Thank you so much, Captain Gomes. I
18 know we were all really looking forward to that presentation
19 because these are a few questions that we -- had arisen in a
20 couple of years. We were not able to hear much more than
21 maybe 10 percent of that. We have had a request by one of the
22 other commissioners via a chat to have that video sent to each
23 of us individually. Chief Ventura, did you say that is
24 possible?

25 CHIEF VENTURA: Yeah, we'll be happy to send that

1 back out to all of you.

2 CHAIR VARES: Excellent. Thank you so much, Captain
3 Gomes. That looked like a lot of work to get all of that
4 together, so we're all -- I'm sure we're looking forward to
5 actually getting to hear it and watch it.

6 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Chair. Chair, I have a
7 comment.

8 CHAIR VARES: Yes.

9 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Yeah, I just want to say,
10 you know, being a woman, you know, say whatever you think,
11 what you need, but I just -- I didn't realize we had so many
12 women as firefighters. I really feel good that there are a
13 lot of women, and I encourage others to get involved and it
14 just feels good to have representation in the Maui Fire
15 Department. Thank you, Chief Gomes. Thanks, Chair.

16 CHAIR VARES: Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER STERLING: You're welcome.

18 CHAIR VARES: Captain Gomes, I didn't mean to cut
19 you off. Did you have more for us?

20 CHIEF VENTURA: No, unless you folks have more
21 questions, I think she's good, she said.

22 CHAIR VARES: Okay. Commissioners, do you have
23 questions for Captain Gomes?

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Fire away.

25 CHAIR VARES: All right. I've got one. Captain

1 Gomes or Fire One through Four, do you all have any active
2 recruitment plans for more female firefighters, or do you kind
3 of not see that as a need because we're well represented? I
4 think from the looks of the video, we're well represented in
5 quality. How do you all feel about quantity?

6 CHIEF VENTURA: So we definitely don't shy away from
7 inviting them in. When we go to schools, you know, the high
8 schools and such, we're instructing our members who are out
9 there to (inaudible) that this is not just a -- you know, a
10 man's field, that, you know, we welcome, you know, any of our
11 wahine to come and try out to be a firefighter. Recently you
12 might have seen on the news that the FBI test was shown on
13 KHNL, and they had male and female standards for their
14 physical agility. Our standards in our department are the
15 same, just so you're aware, for all entry. And, you know,
16 we've discussed a variety of reasons to keep it that way, but,
17 essentially, the work that any firefighter 1 is required to do
18 at the entry-level needs to be at least this physically
19 qualified to do their job because there's potential they might
20 not be working behind a desk for ten or 15 years in the --
21 early on in their career, so we talk to them.

22 Our internship program that we run through our
23 training bureau, we'd be happy to have any of the schools and
24 any of the female school people come and from any of the local
25 schools, even Molokai as well, because we can cater the

1 program to them. We don't have a set program for our interns,
2 but we would be able to see what their timeline is, what their
3 availability is, and then build a program around them. So
4 coming up next month, there's a county job fair. In Molokai
5 this weekend there's that county outreach, and we'll be
6 explicit about saying, yeah, we definitely welcome any female
7 firefighters.

8 CHAIR VARES: Thank you, Chief.

9 Does anyone else have any questions or comments?

10 (No response.)

11 CHAIR VARES: Doesn't sound like it. Well, I would
12 like to move on to, unfortunately, Item 7 on our agenda, which
13 is the end-of-term appreciation for two beloved commissioners.
14 Gang, today is the last meeting for Commissioner Donna
15 sterling and Gregg Lundberg, and I am sorry to see you both
16 go. You both have brought so much to the commission, two
17 dramatically different viewpoints, and I love it.

18 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Thank you.

19 CHAIR VARES: So, thank you guys so much for all of
20 your time and dedication. I can't think of two others that
21 have been more dedicated with their time and opinions, and
22 experience, so thank you guys so much. Come back, come visit
23 us.

24 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Chair, may I -- Gregg, do
25 you want to say something? Gregg?

1 CHAIR VARES: Unmute yourself, Gregg.

2 COMMISSIONER BURNS: You're muted, Gregg.

3 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Go ahead, Gregg.

4 COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: Okay. Can you hear me now?

5 CHAIR VARES: Yes.

6 COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: All right. Well, I just
7 wanted to thank everybody for their participation in the
8 program. I did five years on the police and then came over
9 and did five on the fire and a very different experience on
10 fire. I tell you, it's -- it was a wonderful experience. We
11 got to hire two chiefs during our tenure, which is -- which is
12 a pretty amazing event just to do so one, but to do two was
13 pretty cool. I look forward to my next commission. I don't
14 know what it is. I'm gonna take a year off. But I just
15 wanted to thank everybody in Maui Fire Department. You guys
16 have been great, and I've learned a tremendous amount about
17 your operation and what it takes to be a fireman. I have a
18 lot of -- a lot of respect for what you do and how you do it
19 and the way you carry yourselves. So I'm very proud to have
20 finished my term, and I'm sure Donna will say it more
21 eloquently than I did because she's so good at speaking but
22 thank you, everybody, it's been a great five years, and I look
23 to maybe coming back again after we sit out for a year.

24 Donna.

25 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Gregg, thank you, Gregg.

1 So I just want to say it's been a pleasure. It's
2 been a good run, a good journey with all of you. Fire has
3 been my passion because we've been in so many. I will be
4 going to the water -- board of water supply commission. I'll
5 be with the council on Monday for an interview. However, with
6 that being said, that's the balance, that's the way it goes.
7 You know, I -- one thing I would like to encourage our
8 commission and their families is to make sure that you
9 encourage other people, not only the firefighters and ocean
10 people but to get them on the boards and commissions. We
11 should not have any vacancies on boards and commissions if you
12 really love Maui.

13 And I'm gonna end on this. I was given a present
14 from the Maui Fire Department in with other goodies, and this
15 is a shirt. It says "Maui Fire Department Commissioner."
16 (Inaudible.) So when I wore this to the rubbish dump, and I
17 was so proud of it and, you know, I got men to help me unload
18 my rubbish. I went to Home Depot and the (inaudible) said,
19 I'll help you. They looked at my -- my patch, and he left his
20 wife and helped me load the lumber to my truck. I thank him
21 so much. I'm telling you, stay the term that you need to
22 because you get a patch and you get to be somebody, and you
23 get help from men, which was really nice. It's been a good
24 run. We'll see you around. Hopefully not here, but I'll be
25 on the water, lots of things with water. Thanks, Chair, fire

1 (inaudible), Chief.

2 CHAIR VARES: Thank you guys so much, really.

3 (Applause.)

4 CHIEF VENTURA: Chair, can I say a few words?

5 CHAIR VARES: I don't know -- I don't know how we're
6 gonna fill you guys' shoes.

7 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Oh, you will. You will.

8 CHIEF VENTURA: Vice Chair, can I say a few words?

9 CHAIR VARES: Absolutely. Go ahead.

10 CHIEF VENTURA: Okay, thanks. I just want to take
11 this opportunity to thank both of you but also all of you.
12 You know, as Gregg mentioned, he has been a commissioner
13 through two hiring processes of the fire chief, and they're
14 not easy, and they're very time-consuming, and they take
15 additional dedication outside of this normal one month -- you
16 know, one meeting a month. And that in itself, five years
17 just joining on once a month, is a lot, and I appreciate
18 everything you guys do. But Gregg was able to go through two
19 fire chief appointments, and that's a -- that's dedication and
20 appreciation from him. Donna joined us kind of in the middle;
21 she took the place of somebody who had to leave our
22 commission, so she had a short term, but both Donna and Gregg
23 brought, you know, great insight, great input, always asked us
24 the questions that I thought were fair and challenging. You
25 know, didn't try to oppose any, tried to support us, tried to

1 make -- you know, make our commission and our department as
2 best as it could be. So thank you to both of you for that. I
3 really appreciate it.

4 As you both mentioned that you're gonna be looking
5 to go on to other commissions, that's fabulous. I think what
6 I heard recently was we're thirty-something positions
7 shorthanded on commissions, so we can always use great
8 volunteers like you all in the county. And I hope, as Donna
9 said, more people do stay active and get involved. That's
10 great.

11 And then lastly, I hope you guys all received your
12 packets this -- this month so that you have some of the things
13 that we gave you. As Donna mentioned, the commission shirt.
14 It's important for us to thank you and recognize you for all
15 the work that you do, so that's why you guys received the polo
16 shirts for what you do for our community, and that's
17 important.

18 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Thank you so much for that.

19 CHIEF VENTURA: Absolutely. And we'll miss you
20 both. If we were in person, we would have a lei for you, but
21 I apologize that we're not in person. Did you both receive
22 your plaques?

23 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Yes, we did. It's up by my
24 TV. Thank you. What a gift, I mean a shirt, hat, and plaque
25 and I'm good to go to water.

1 CHIEF VENTURA: Okay. Well, thank you. The plaque
2 is the least we can do for you as a mahalo for all your time
3 dedication.

4 COMMISSIONER STERLING: (Inaudible) I could do more.
5 Yeah, it's all good. Okay.

6 CHAIR VARES: Thanks, Chief Ventura.

7 Does anybody else have anything they'd like to add?
8 Oh, let's see. I've got something popping up on the chat
9 here.

10 We've got Makalapua saying, "Mahalo, Gregg and
11 Donna." And Commissioner Dylan Andrion also saying mahalo.
12 Assistant Chief Lindo also saying mahalo to the two of you.

13 So you guys are beloved and will be missed. Thank
14 you guys so much.

15 COMMISSIONER STERLING: You've got this. Okay.

16 CHAIR VARES: Well, I think that's the end of it.
17 We can cut you guys loose so that you can go and enjoy your --
18 your partial retirement from commissions for a hot second.

19 Do I have a motion to adjourn the meeting?

20 COMMISSIONER STERLING: Oh, Chair, I would like to
21 make a motion to end the meeting of March 17th.

22 COMMISSIONER LUNDBERG: And I'll second it.

23 CHAIR VARES: I have a motion. Motioner is Donna
24 Sterling, seconded by Commissioner Gregg Lundberg as they head
25 out the door.

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COMMISSIONER STERLING: Aloha. Goodbye.

CHAIR VARES: Thank you so much. We'll see the rest
of you next month for our next meeting.

(The proceedings were adjourned at 11:00 a.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF HAWAII)
) SS.
COUNTY OF MAUI)

I, Sandra J. Gran, Certified Shorthand Reporter for the State of Hawaii, hereby certify that on March 17, 2022, at 10:01 a.m., the proceedings was taken down by me in machine shorthand and was thereafter reduced to typewritten form under my supervision; that the foregoing represents, to the best of my ability, a true and correct transcript of the proceedings had in the foregoing matter.

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

DATED this 6th day of April, 2022, in Maui, Hawaii.



Sandra J. Gran, RPR
Hawaii CSR 424