

COUNTY OF HAWAII FIRE COMMISSION
FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT
March 10, 2004

Welcome

Congratulations & welcome to new Fire Commissioners Glen Matsuda and Joe Whitney.

Budget

- Fire Department FY 2004-05 budget and program review to be heard before the County Council on March 11, 2004 at 1:30 p.m. Total budget submittal is \$24,737,459, which as reported last month, includes a total of 30 positions and start-up costs for Kalaoa and Volcano fire stations.

Alternative Funding and Grants

- Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) in the Department of Homeland Security announced open application period for Assistance to Firefighter Grant program. (March 1 to April 2, 2004). Grantwriters Captain Albert Kaaihili, FF Keola Payao, and FF Michael Hayashida are actively researching material for our grant submittal for the acquisition of burn trailers.

Capital Improvement Projects

- Puna Public Safety Complex: No new updates to report on this project.
- Ogasawara Property Update: Negotiations still ongoing between County and property owner.
- Fire Administration: At the request of Mayor Kim, re-visited SunSunLau with owner Kenneth Fujiyama. Request to agendaize visitation of Fire Admin sites with Fire Commissioners following next month's meeting on April 14.
- Finalized our submittals of our Capital Improvement Program for FY 04-05, which will include design and plans for a new Naalehu Fire Station (\$200,000) and design and plans for a replacement Honokaa Fire Station (\$200,000).

Promotions and Hiring

- 30th Recruit Class will begin on March 16, 2004, with a class of 20 fire fighter recruits, who have all accepted formal offers of employment.
- FEO and Fire Captain Internal Recruitments: Trying to establish the assessment portion of the process.

- Fire Rescue Specialist promotions effective March 1, 2004: Four positions are permanent promotions (2 at Waiakea & 2 at Kailua). Three received temporary promotions (2 at Waiakea & 1 at Kailua). Learned a lot from the process as far as establishing better communication to our personnel.
- Two Fire Radio Dispatchers hired: Cassie Fernandez and Tasha Kodani.
- Two Fire Mechanics should be on board on April 1, 2004. Pending their medical screening process.
- BC Inspector: Looking for creative ways to fill this position. Will expedite promotions of Fire Inspectors.

Operations Division

- EOC Activation: Stormy weather statewide. Thank you to Ocean View Volunteers for being part of the storm assessment.
- RMS Update: Training held for AFCs and Acting AFCs on February 24 and 27 focusing on their duties as reviewing officers. RMS Committee will meet on March 11, 2004 and will be looking at implementing a second module—Training.
- Firewise-Ocean View: Looking at about a group of 25 to start Firewise in Ocean View.

Prevention Division

- State Fire Council quarterly meeting in Kona on February 19/20, 2004. Good opportunity for Inspectors to network with their counterparts statewide.

Training Division

- Status of 28th Recruit Class: Will complete their FF Recruit probation period on March 16, and start their second rotation of station assignments on March 17.
- Driver Competency Training Program Update: Driver auditor training began February 3 and continued islandwide on various dates. Of the 271 drivers, 120 have been audited to date.
- Haz Mat Technician – Train the Trainer Program: Captains Jason Gushiken and Ralph Yawata attending class on Oahu from March 8 to 12, 2004.
- Meetings with Hawaii Community College and UH-Hilo chancellors, re: future plans, training/partnership opportunities. 1) Bringing back the fire science program to Hawaii County. 2) Use of their facilities for classes.

Volunteer Division

- Driver Training Class Update: Three classes conducted thus far: 1) 4 drivers certified; 2) 2 drivers certified; 3) 2 drivers certified. Total of 8 certifications. Volcano and Ocean View are up and running.
- The next Volunteer Fire Chief's meeting will be hosted by Fire Administration and be held sometime in April. Date has yet to be confirmed.

EMS Division

- 29th Recruit Class: Just completed classroom segment of EMT-B. Going to stations for clinical rotations for about five weeks, then back to EMT-I.

Fire Auxiliary Services

- CADs link began at 4:00 a.m. this morning (March 10).
- Attended orientation/awareness meeting on Operation Strong Angel II and Groove, which is an islandwide wireless technology and an alternative communication system for County during disasters.

New Projects/Business

- Status of Fire Commission Secretary Position. Communicated needs to Mayor; they will be looking at alternatives. Martha offered to remain on until April.
- Continuing to track progress of key bills in 2004 State Legislature that may impact our department. Have provided testimony for:
 - Senate Bill 2136. Original intent was to establish a Statewide Firefighting Training Academy on the Big Island. Has been amended to "public safety training academy" under the jurisdiction of the State Department of Public Safety.
 - Senate Bill 2399, relating to the funding of an emergency ambulance services in the Ocean View community. Continues to move forward—passed third reading and moved out of the Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs and Ways and Means committees. Written testimonies provided. Bill amended to include operating expenses.
- National Fire Academy: Chief's report on his two-week training at NFA. Highly recommended for all officers.
- Reminder on 2nd Annual Employee Recognition and Awards dinner: Scheduled for April 3, 2004, at the Royal Kona Resort. Invitations mailed to Fire Commissioners; hand delivered to 2 new commissioners today.

Public Relations

- Hugs Not Drugs Sign Waving Island-wide – February 20, 2004. All stations were asked to participate.
- Planning stages for Solutions 2004 conference: May 1, 2004 at Waikoloa Beach Marriott.
- Mother's Day floral bouquet delivery project on May 8 (Saturday) to benefit American Cancer Society. Last year raised \$4,000.
- Emergency Medical Services Week May 16 to 22, 2004. 4th Annual EMS Week 5K Fun Run/2.0 mile walk on May 22 at Liliuokalani Gardens in Hilo.
- Implementation of citizen valor/recognition awards program by FEO Dennis Iyo.