

Disaster & Fire Safety Commission
Regular Meeting
Wednesday October 27, 2021

Present: Jose Luis Bedolla, Shirley Dean, Weldon Bradstreet, Nancy Rader, Toby Simmons, Toni Stein,

Absent: Kim-Mai Cutler (Excused), Paul Degenkolb

Staff: Keith May, Khin Chin, Abraham Roman, David Sprague, Steve Riggs, Christina Erickson

Public: Attendees 9: Henry DeNero, Alec Dara-Abrams, Benay Dara-Abrams, C Chen, Chris Cullander, Kathleen E. Kelly, Marty Lorber, Richard Thomason, Kelly Hammergren

Preliminary Matters

Call to Order

J. Bedolla called meeting to order at 7:03pm
T. Simmons arrived at 7:04

Approval of the Agenda

Reverse Items 5 and 6

Approved by Acclimation

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

David Peattie said that BPDNN said that the free emergency go-kit program for seniors and people with disabilities has assembled 1250 with 1000 distributed. This is combined with an educational program provided to the 750 people that have participated.

1. Fire Department Staff Report

W. Bradstreet arrived at 7:20p

Measure FF Monthly Report

- a. Budget Overview – Chief Roman
 - i. Program Review

- 1. **Standards of Coverage Analysis** – This contract was approved by the Council on July 27, 2021, and work has begun to provide the consultant

with a large amount of supporting data. This includes basic department demographics, emergency call response times, staffing levels, known and planned construction within the City and much more. The resulting work will include an evaluation of the City's risk profile (from a fire, EMS and rescue perspective), optimum fire station locations, crew/apparatus staffing and deployment, new employee work schedules, and appropriate response time standards. We expect this work to take between 6 – 12 months.

2. **Project Management and Subject Matter Expert (SME)** – The number and complexity of projects that the Department has engaged in over the next 3-5 years is monumental. We are bringing onboard a consultant who will (1) help us manage all projects to ensure that timelines are updated frequently, goals and objectives are met, project dependencies are tracked and updated and key communication occurs throughout the planning cycle and (2) provide the Department with external experts that have relevant experience in some of the more complex areas of work including emergency medical services deployment and developing a regional training collaborative agreement.
3. **Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)** – We are working with an expert that will engage with us to create a community-based plan that is focused on identifying and addressing local hazards and risks from wildfire in the City's Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas. The plan will determine what is at risk and will provide a road map of actions for the community to address the wildfire threat. We want to ensure the public funds and time we dedicate actually result in measurable improvements to the community's preparation and resiliency.
4. **Wildfire Prevention / Mitigation** – The department is in the process of expanding it's traditional "Hazardous Fire Area" program of wildfire safety inspections to ultimately include all properties in Fire Zones 2 and 3. This represents a massive increase of inspections from about 1436 inspections to 8620 inspections. There is so much important work that we need to focus on as a community with regard to preparation and prevention of a catastrophic wildland fire. The Department literally does not have the people available to do this work. To help move these important projects ahead, the Department has hired back nine retired members of the organization who have relevant experience in these program areas. They began work in September (the hiring process took about two months) and are focused on four main projects; restarting the Safe Passages program, establishing more FireWise groups in Berkeley, completing the CWPP process and implementing the Vegetation Management programs, and performing vegetation management inspections in Fire Zone 2. We are so grateful they all agreed to come back and help. In addition, Fire Prevention staff are preparing an amendment to our local fire code adoption which will

expand fire sprinkler installation and retrofit requirements that currently exist in the Panoramic neighborhood into all of Fire Zone 2.

5. **Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Paramedic Recruitment** – A key component of transitioning our ambulance model to a more cost effective “single function” model is developing two new job classifications. One for Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and one for Paramedic. Both of these new classifications will no longer also serve as firefighters. These classifications have been jointly developed by a labor management group within the Department and are working their way through the City review and approval process. We hope to begin recruitment sometime in late 2021 or early 2022. This will allow several important changes to occur:

- a. It will create entry level EMT jobs within our Department. This will allow us to directly tie to the Berkeley High School Berkeley Fire and EMS pathway program that has been very successful. Graduates from that program will be qualified to apply for these entry level jobs.
- b. The EMT classification will also allow us to recruit from a much larger applicant pool, which we know is more diverse than the paramedic applicant pool.

6. **Division of Training Property** – Our team has been actively looking at property throughout the region. We are working with the City’s real estate broker to determine the best path forward. We have engaged departments within Alameda and Contra Costa counties in preliminary conversations regarding a partnership to support a regional center. There is a lot of interest in this model and it would do much to break down the invisible barriers between agencies. Training together as a region is the beginning of a more collaborative, regional fire service that will be more resilient and better prepared to work together in larger incidents. We have a subject matter expert working with us who was involved in creating a regional training collaborative in an adjacent county and we are excited to have his leadership and experience to pull from. We hope to have a property identified within the next several months, if not sooner.

ii. Implementation & Metrics

1. **Outdoor Warning System** – Contract has been created and waiting for Genasys to sign. MOU with Zaytuna has been signed. BUSD MOU will be heard on November 17th by the BUSD Board.

iii. RFP Updates

b. Program Specific Reports

i. Defensible Space Inspection Updates

Vegetation Management Inspections – Annuitants
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September 20, 2021 – October 18, 2021

Inspections	Violations	Re-Inspect Req.	No Violations
521	138	138	383

ii. Other

Measure GG Monthly Report – Chief Roman

c. Budget Overview

i. Program Review

ii. Implementation & Metric

1. Hybrid CERT Model

- a. The Office of Emergency Services continues to update and revamp the CERT curriculum. The goal of the CERT revamp is to provide a flexible program that can adapt to the changing COVID-19 pandemic and provide increased flexibility for interested community members. It will contain three parts: online self-study through the California Specialized Training Institute (CSTI), virtual instructor-led sessions to review the online modules, and a ½ day practicum session to gain hands on experience with the course material.

The online self-study learning modules are now on the City of Berkeley website here. These online modules can be accessed via the Cal OES training website, the California Specialized Training Institute (CSTI). The City’s website includes a “how to” guide to help community members log in and access the training. OES continues to design the accompanying virtual and in-person practicum sessions and will update community members once they are ready.

- b. Evacuation Workshops held in September and October to assist the community in preparing their household for evacuations. 58 households participated.
- c. Evacuation Virtual Drill held on October 9th.
 - i. 250 households registered for drill.
 - ii. 150 joined online debriefing.
- d. Objectives:
 - i. Describe which AC Alerts they may receive
 - ii. Identify their evacuation zone on Zonehaven and see what the follow up actions are, depending on the incident
 - iii. Practice fire weather plans with other community members

iii. RFP Updates

Department Activities

- d. Graduation of BFD 110th Fire Academy on October 1, 2021. We started with 13 recruits in this entry level firefighter-paramedic class, there have been two resignations. They participated in a 20-week State Fire Training Accredited course that results in State Certification. They have begun their field evaluation time to be cleared to work as a paramedic in Alameda County. Depending on experience and skill, this will take anywhere from two to six weeks, then they will begin working without a Field Training Officer (FTO).
- e. Entry Level Interviews are underway for next year's 111th Academy.

Call Volume Report

Fire Department Report by California Incident Type		
September 14, - October 20, 2021		
Fires (structures, mobile properties, vegetation, rubbish, equipment, cooking, chimney,	31	
Encampment Fires (structures, warming/cooking, debris)	16	
Explosion - no fire (overpressure ruptures, explosions)	0	
Rescue & EMS (medical assist, vehicle accident)	932	
Hazardous Condition - no fire (combustible spills/leaks, chemical release, radioactive condition, electrical wiring problem, biological hazard, potential accident w/ building/aircraft/vehicles)	63	
Service Calls (person in distress, water issue, smoke/odor problem, animal issue, public assist, cover assignment/standby)	121	

Good Intent (canceled en-route, wrong location, nothing found, steam mistaken for smoke)	118	
False Alarm Calls (malicious, malfunction, unintentional, biohazard scare)	183	
Severe WX (lightening, wind storms)	0	
Special Incidents (citizen complaints)	3	
TOTAL	1,467	

Unit Utilization	Apparatus Count	3,275
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Consent Items

2. Approval of Draft Minutes of Meeting of October 27, 2021*

Motion to approve the minutes as revised: Bedolla

Second: Bradstreet

Vote: 6 Ayes: Bedolla, Simmons, Dean, Bradstreet, Stein, Rader; 0 Noes; 2 Absent: Cutler, Degenkolb; 0 Abstain:

Action Items

3. Recommendation to identify High Risk Areas that are exempt from State Imposed Housing Increases Due to Public Safety Considerations (Dean)*

Motion to request that the City Council define the location of those areas within the city of Berkeley in which residents are at high risk due to public safety considerations and use this information to guide the Housing Element process so that greater density and development in those areas is avoided to the extent reasonably possible.: Dean

Second: Stein

Vote: 4 Ayes: Simmons, Dean, Bradstreet, Stein 0 Noes; 2 Absent: Cutler, Degenkolb; 2 Abstain: Bedolla, Rader

4. Revisiting the Commission's Recommendation to Use Measure FF Funds as Intended by Voters for Firefighting, Emergency Medical Response, 9-1-1 Communications Services, Hazard Mitigation, and Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness; to Not Reduce General Fund Allocations Towards Fire Services; and to Support Effective Commission Oversight*

Item carried forward to next meeting.

Discussion Items

5. November 2022 Infrastructure Bond Ballot Measure (Public Works/Parks Recreation Waterfront Staff)
6. Criteria for use of a portion of Measure FF funds for vegetation clearance on private land (Rader)*
7. Commission Home Page Resource List (Bedolla)
8. Future Agenda Items and Next Steps
 - a. Volunteer Involvement

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: Rader

Second: Stein

Vote: 6 Ayes: Bedolla, Simmons, Dean, Bradstreet, Stein, Rader; 0 Noes; 2 Absent: Cutler, Degenkolb; 0 Abstain:

Adjourned at 9:53p