



County of Santa Cruz

FIRE DEPARTMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION

701 OCEAN STREET, SUITE 330, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

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January 15, 2021

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION 2019 AND 2020 BIENNIAL REPORT

ROLES OF THE COMMISSION:

The County Fire Department Advisory Commission (FDAC) exercises the following responsibilities in its efforts to ensure that the interests of the County Fire Department, career and volunteer fire companies, and citizens residing within the County Fire Department jurisdiction, are protected and promoted by monitoring, studying, and advising the County Fire Chief and Board of Supervisors on the following:

The preparation and implementation of the County Fire Department Master Plan; and

Methods for improving the cost effectiveness and delivery of the County's fire protection, as well as its rescue and emergency medical services programs; and

County Fire Department's budget priorities and specific budget recommendations; and

The changing role or mission of each of the volunteer fire companies and the resulting changes in their requirements; and

Such other matters relating to the county's fire protection, rescue and emergency medical services program, as the committee desires to bring to the attention of the Fire Chief and Board of Supervisors. [Ord. 5279 § 19, 2018; Ord. 4455 § 1, 1997].

COMMISSION STRUCTURE:

Per Santa Cruz County Ordinance, Chapters 2.120.020 and 2.120.030 governing membership and term of office, the commission consists of five board appointed members for a term of four years and two at-large members appointed by the volunteer company officers' organization and the Office of Emergency Services for an indefinite period. As of December 2020, the Commission is comprised of the following members:

<i>Commission Member</i>	<i>Representing</i>	<i>Term of Office</i>
Alex Leman	1 st District	02/15/05 to 04/01/2021
Carey Pico	2 nd District	03/22/2016 to 04/01/2021
Janet Webb	3 rd District	05/15/2015 to 04/01/2023
John Walker	4 th District	03/24/2015 to 04/01/2023
Arnie Wernick	5 th District	08/07/07 to 04/01/2021
Michael Beaton	Office of Emergency Services	11/18/20-indefinitely
Rosemary Anderson	Office of Emergency Services	10/11/16 – 11/18/20
Douglass Aumack	Volunteer Company Officers	10/16/12 - indefinitely

ATTENDANCE:

(See attached roster)

COMMISSION STAFF

The CAL FIRE/County Fire Deputy Chief serves as staff to the Commission.
A CAL FIRE/County Fire Staff Services Analyst serves as administrative secretary.

MEETING DATES, TIME AND LOCATION:

The FDAC schedules six regular meetings each year usually in January, March, May, July, September, and November. The regular meetings are held from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the CAL FIRE Headquarters on Highway 9 in Felton. The Commission's mailing address is 701 Ocean Street, Room 330, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. Due to COVID, there have been exceptions made on a meeting by meeting basis, resulting in the cancellation or venue change to a virtual platform for some meetings.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS – 2019 and 2020:

Commission members continued to participate on the Budget Subcommittee to review and recommend the annual County Fire Department proposed budgets in fiscal years 2018/2019 and 2019/2020.

Commission supported several county-wide volunteer recruitment events resulting in 21 new volunteer firefighters, which offset attrition and maintained current response.

Commission members recommended and supported the implementation of County Volunteer Tracking System (CVTS), and of Active 9-1-1 membership for volunteer emergency response notifications.

FDAC recommended purchase of one new water tender and three new utility vehicles to replace failing equipment and maintain current response effectiveness.

The Commission worked throughout 2019 with Supervisor Bruce McPherson's office and County Fire staff to support and promote the new 2020 CSA 48 ballot measure which

helped to close the gap in County Fire's long-term structural budget deficit. The resulting funds are being used to restore County Fire staffing to three firefighters per engine during the non-fire season, provide funds for purchasing mobile equipment for volunteer companies, and to purchase personal protective equipment (PPE), including turnouts and wildland gear. This is a significant accomplishment and will result in improved service to the those served by Santa Cruz County Fire Department.

FUTURE GOALS

2021-23 Commission Goals for Strategic Plan Subcommittee

- Development of a new, comprehensive 5-year strategic plan.
- Continuing assessment of the County Fire's ability to provide service, given expected increases in financial demands over the long term.
- Continue documenting service delivery and operational needs.
- Continue oversight of County Fire's management, training, resources, and volunteer personnel.

2021-2023 Commission Goals for Budget Subcommittee

- Review and prioritize various County Fire facility maintenance projects, equipment needs, and financial obligations.
- Improve the transparency of the budget by tracking ongoing expenditures and daylighting major expenditures such as those for staffing, mobile equipment, and PPE.
- Plan for potential long-term budget impacts based on equipment needs, weather pattern and climate changes, inflation, and personnel costs.
- Seek out additional means to augment funding for County Fire.
- Develop a Mobile Equipment Replacement Plan based on new funding available from the recent ballot measure.

2021-2023 Commission Goals for Recruitment Subcommittee

- Continue to develop methods for marketing County Fire through branding, advertisement, events, and community outreach.
- Increased attendance at recruitment events.
- Work with staff to complete the new County Fire website.
- Continue to support public education and involvement, to the betterment of County Fire and the citizens it serves.

RECOMMENDATION:

As liaisons in an advisory capacity to the County Board of Supervisors and the County Fire Chief, it is recommended that the FDAC continue to support activities and policies necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the County Fire Department and its staff.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION
2019-2020 ATTENDANCE MATRIX**

	1/23/19	3/20/19	5/15/19	7/17/19	9/18/19	11/20/19	1/15/20	3/18/20 Cancelled (Covid-19)	5/20/20 Cancelled (Covid-19)	7/15/20 Cancelled (Covid-19)	9/16/20 Virtual	11/18/20 Virtual
1 st District, Alex Leman	X	X	X	X	EA	EA	X	NA	NA	NA	X	X
2 nd District, Carey Pico (Appointed 3/15/16)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA	X	X
3 rd District, Janet Webb (Appointed June 9, 2015)	X	X	X	EA	EA	X	X	NA	NA	NA	X	X
4 th District, John Walker	X	X	X	X	X	X	EA	NA	NA	NA	X	EA
5 th District, Arnie Wernick	X	X	X	X	EA	X	X	NA	NA	NA	X	X
Volunteer Firefighters Representative, Douglas Aumack	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA	X	X
SC County Office of Emergency Services, Rosemary Anderson	X	EA	EA	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA	X	X

X = Present, **EA** = Excused Absence, **V** = Vacant Position