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| CNTYSEAL | **County of Santa Cruz****FIRE DEPARTMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION**701 Ocean Street, Suite 330, Santa Cruz, Ca 95060-4073 (831) 454-2210 Fax: (831) 454-2710 Tdd: (831) 454-2123 |

January 31, 2023

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**2021 AND 2022 BI-ANNUAL 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.

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 nominated by the volunteer company officers’ organization and the Office of Emergency Services for an indefinite period. As of December 2022, the Commission is comprised of the following members:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Commission Member* | *Representing* | *Term Expiration* |
| Sanjay Khandelwal | 1st District | 04/01/2025 |
| Carey Pico | 2nd District | 04/01/2025 |
| Janet Webb | 3rd District | 04/01/2023 |
| John Walker | 4th District | 04/01/2023 |
| Arnie Wernick | 5th District | 04/01/2025 |
| Michael Beaton | Office of Emergency Services | N/A |
| Douglass Aumack | Volunteer Company Officers | N/A |

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 person 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.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS – 2021 & 2022:

Commission members were allowed to review and ask questions about the annual County Fire Department proposed budgets in fiscal years 2020/21 and 2021/22, but did not participate in the actual budgeting process or decisions.

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

The following FDAC recommended vehicles were received in 2021 and 2022:

* FDAC members were not involved in deciding what to buy or what vendor to use in building the vehicles. FDAC was informed by the Chief as purchases moved forward.

Commission members responded to 9 individual VFF recruiting-related requests surfaced via [info@volunteerfirefighter.org](mailto:info@volunteerfirefighter.org).

Commission members supported twenty new volunteers from the 21 & 22 BFFA who are now responding County Fire Volunteers.

At the Board’s request, commission members formed a Master Plan Committee that researched and provided specific recommendations regarding the Santa Cruz County Fire Department Master Plan.

Commission members continued to submit specific recommendations to their Board of Supervisor addressing County Fire’s long term financial and operational feasibility.

FUTURE GOALS

*2023-2024 Commission Goals for Master Plan Committee*

* Development of a new, comprehensive 5-year master plan.
* Continuing assessment of the County Fire Department’s ability to provide service, given increasing financial demands;
* Continue the process of documenting service delivery and operational needs;
* Continue oversight of County Fire’s management, training, resources, and volunteer personnel.
* Consider the impact of any county-wide changes resulting from the forthcoming LAFCO report

*2023-2024 Commission Goals for Budget Committee*

* Review and advise on the upcoming contract with CAL FIRE
* Review and prioritize various County Fire facility maintenance projects, equipment needs, and financial obligations;
* Seek out additional funding mechanisms for County Fire.
* Plan for the potential long term budget changes based on equipment needs, weather pattern changes, personnel costs.
* Consider the impact of any county-wide changes resulting from the forthcoming LAFCO report

*2023-2024 Commission Goals for Recruitment Committee*

* Develop methods for marketing County Fire through branding, advertisement, events, and community outreach;
* Continue to support public education and involvement, to the betterment of County Fire and the citizens it serves.
* Personally attend more recruitment events.
* Establishing County non-responding Fire Co. Volunteer opportunities.
* Investigate establishing a Wildland Firefighter-only Volunteer role analogous to the current EMR-only responders

*2023-2024 Commission Goals for CAL FIRE /County Fire Staff*

* Pursue the VFF response education and skills development.
* Utilize the professional leadership and technical skills of our VFF’s.
* Increase transparency of County Fire operations.

RECOMMENDATION:

In advisory capacity to the County Board of Supervisors and the County Fire Chief, the FDAC continue to support activities and policies necessary for the effective operation of the County Fire Department and its staff.

Fire Department Advisory Commission

# **2021-2022 Attendance Matrix**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***1/20/21***  ***CANCELLED*** | ***3/17/21*** | ***5/19/21*** | ***7/21/21*** | ***9/15/21*** | ***11/17/21*** | ***1/19/22*** | ***3/16/22*** | ***5/18/22*** | ***7/20/22*** | ***9/21/22*** | ***11/16/22*** |
| 1st District, **Alex Leman**  *(Last meeting 3/17/21)* |  | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1st District, **Sanjay Khandelwal**  *(First meeting 11/17/21)* |  |  |  |  |  | X | X | X | X | EA |  | X |
| 2nd District, **Carey Pico** |  | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |  | X |
| 3rd District, **Janet Webb** |  | X | EA | EA | EA | X | X | X | X | X |  | X |
| 4th District, **John Walker** |  | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A |
| 5th District, **Arnie Wernick** |  | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |  | EA |
| Volunteer Firefighters Representative, **Douglas Aumack** |  | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |  | X |
| SC County Office of Emergency Services, **Michael Beaton** |  | X | X | X | X | X | A | X | X | X |  | X |

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