

# MINUTES ORANGE COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY

**Board of Directors Regular Meeting  
Thursday, April 27, 2023  
6:00 P.M.**

**Regional Fire Operations and Training Center  
Board Room  
1 Fire Authority Road  
Irvine, CA 92602**

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## **CALL TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Orange County Fire Authority Board of Directors was called to order on April 27, 2023, at 6:01 p.m. by Chair Vince Rossini.

**INVOCATION** by OCFA Chaplain Harry Robinson.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** by Director Tetterer.

**ROLL CALL** by Clerk of the Authority

Vince Rossini, Villa Park, Chair  
Troy Bourne, San Juan Capistrano  
Katrina Foley, County of Orange  
Carol Gamble, Rancho Santa Margarita  
Gene Hernandez, Yorba Linda  
Kelly Jennings, Laguna Niguel  
Austin Lombard, Tustin  
Nitesh Patel, La Palma  
Dave Shawver, Stanton  
Mark Tetterer, Lake Forest  
Donald P. Wagner, County of Orange

John O'Neill, Garden Grove, Vice Chair  
Chris Duncan, San Clemente  
John Gabbard, Dana Point  
Noel Hatch, Laguna Woods  
Anne Hertz-Mallari, Cypress  
Joe Kalmick, Seal Beach  
Chi Charlie Nguyen, Westminster  
Bob Ruesch, Mission Viejo  
Joshua Sweeney, Laguna Hills  
Connor Traut, Buena Park

**Absent:** Phil Bacerra, San Juan Capistrano  
Shelley Hasselbrink, Los Alamitos

Ross Chun, Aliso Viejo  
Tammy Kim, Irvine

## **Also present were:**

Fire Chief Brian Fennessy  
Assistant Chief Robert Cortez  
Assistant Chief Rob Capobianco  
Assistant Chief Shane Sherwood  
Assistant Chief Stephanie Holloman  
Clerk of the Authority Maria D. Huizar

Deputy Chief TJ McGovern  
Assistant Chief Lori Smith  
Assistant Chief Jim Ruane  
Assistant Chief Tim Perkins  
Director of Communications Matt Olson  
General Counsel David Kendig

## REPORTS

### A. Report from the Budget and Finance Committee Chair (FILE 11.12)

Budget and Finance Committee Chair John O'Neill reported at its April 12, 2023, meeting, the Committee received and filed the Communication with Auditors for Fiscal Year 2022/23 Financial Audit. The Committee also reviewed and recommended by unanimous vote to forward the Fiscal Year 2021/22 Backfill/Overtime and Calendar Year 2022 Total Earnings/Compensation Analysis to the full Board for consideration and approval of the recommended actions.

### B. Report from the Fire Chief (FILE 11.14)

Fire Chief Brian Fennessy reported on recent Structure Fires; 37 structure fires in OCFA service region, sending over 1,000 firefighters on 169 engines and 94 trucks. He reminded all of the upcoming Best & Bravest Award Event; recognizing the heroism and excellence of OCFA firefighters and professional staff. Chief Fennessy noted the Mental Health/Behavioral Health & Wellness Program has a new ally, "Pax" a Peer Support K9; an addition to the commitment working to make progress with mental and behavioral health of personnel. Lastly, he commented on the Third Quarter Update, FY 2022/23 Strategic Goals and Objectives; many goals have been completed or are in progress. This progress was made despite the increase in call volume and because of collaborative work of the firefighters, professional staff, Local 3631 and the honorable Board of Directors.

Director Foley and Director Nguyen arrived at this point (6:10 p.m.).

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

### 1. PRESENTATION (FILE 11.9)

Chair Rossini and Vice Chair O'Neill recognized OCFA Fire Chief Brian Fennessy for five years of service to the OCFA presenting him with his Five-year Challenge coin. Fire Chief Fennessy thanked all the Board Members, Local 3631, and staff for their support.

### 2. CONSENT CALENDAR

On motion of Director Tetteimer and second by Director Hernandez, and by acclamation, approved 21-0 Agenda Item Nos. 2A-2C (Directors Bacerra, Hasselbrink, Kim, and Chun absent).

**A. Minutes for the Board of Directors (FILE 11.06)**

Action:

1. Approve the Minutes for the March 23, 2023, Regular Meeting as submitted.
2. Approve the Minutes for the April 12, 2023, Special Meeting as submitted.

**B. Wildfire Awareness and Prevention Season Proclamation (FILE 11.09A)**

Action: Approve proclamation designating mid-summer through early autumn as “Wildfire Awareness and Prevention Season.”

**C. Renewal of Health Plan Agreement Orange County Professional Firefighters Association (FILE 17.07)**

Action: Approve the Health Plan Agreement between the Orange County Fire Authority and the Orange County Professional Firefighters Association for a term of January 1, 2023, to June 30, 2026.

**3. DISCUSSION CALENDAR**

**A. Approval of Memorandum of Understanding Orange County Employees’ Association (FILE 17.04D1)**

Samantha Soto, OCFA ECC Supervisor and Executive Board of Director for OCEA, thanked the Board for their acknowledgement of the OCEA employees and for moving forward with negotiating a contract.

Assistant Chief Stephanie Holloman presented the Approval of Memorandum of Understanding Orange County Employees’ Association.

Director Chris Duncan acknowledged the work the OCEA employees do, and recognized the Board for moving this MOU forward.

On motion of Director Hernandez and second by Director Hatch, and by acclamation, approved 21-0 (Directors Bacerra, Hasselbrink, Kim, and Chun absent) approved the proposed MOU between the Orange County Fire Authority and the Orange County Employees’ Association for a term of August 23, 2021, through April 26, 2027.



**B. Fiscal Year 2021/22 Backfill/Overtime and Calendar Year 2022 Total Earnings/Compensation Analysis (FILE 15.11)**

On April 12, 2023, the Budget and Finance Committee reviewed the proposed agenda item and directed staff to place the item on the Executive Committee agenda by a vote of 6-0 (Directors Nguyen, Gabbard and Bourne absent).

Chris Hamm, President of Firefighters Local 3631, spoke in support and thanked the Board of Directors for their diligence with this issue, and the Executive Management for their plan to hire and promote.

Assistant Chief Robert Cortez presented the Fiscal Year 2021/22 Backfill/Overtime and Calendar Year 2022 Total Earnings/Compensation Analysis.

Brief discussion ensued.

On motion of Director Hernandez and second by Director Hertz-Mallari, and by acclamation, approved 21-0 (Directors Bacerra, Hasselbrink, Kim, and Chun absent) to:

1. Direct staff to continue pursuing reductions in overtime by filling vacant positions as quickly as possible after the positions become vacant.
2. Authorize staff to temporarily exceed the number of authorized dispatcher positions on the Master Position Control to maximize the number of dispatchers hired into each academy, pending attrition/retirements/promotions that will occur.
3. Direct staff to continue using overtime to fill shifts which are temporarily vacant rather than hiring additional personnel, recognizing this as a cost-effective practice for temporary needs.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS (FILE 11.14)**

Director Wagner noted participating in a “sit along” in the Emergency Command Center, complimenting the dispatchers for the challenging work they do every day.

Director Duncan noted the city of San Clemente had another landslide; Division Chief Cheyne Maule and the search and rescue team were assisting with removing residents from a multi residential structure.

Director Foley reported the red tagging of an apartment complex in San Clemente was a precaution at this time, and there are significant train track closures as well, due to the landslide.

Director Hernandez reported having been on a site visit of the landslide area in San Clemente prior to the most recent land movement.

Vice Chair O'Neill reported on a retail fire in west Garden Grove; the complex was shut down briefly, the response by firefighters allowed for all but three of the tenants to return to their businesses.

**RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION (FILE 11.15)**

**CS1. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS** pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6

Negotiators:

Peter Brown, Liebert Cassidy Whitmore and  
Stephanie Holloman, Assistant Chief/Human  
Resources Director

Employee Organizations:

- Chief Officers Association (COA); and
- Orange County Fire Authority Managers  
Association (OCFAMA)

**CS2. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - SIGNIFICANT EXPOSURE TO LITIGATION** pursuant to paragraph (2) and (3) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9 of the Government Code:

One (1) Case

**CS3. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION** pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.5

Position:

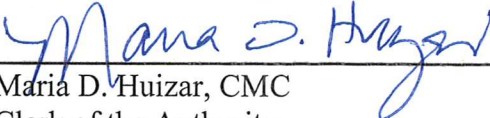
Fire Chief

**RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION**

**CLOSED SESSION REPORT (FILE 11.15)**

General Counsel David Kendig stated there was no reportable action.

**ADJOURNMENT** – Chair Rossini adjourned the meeting at 8:24 p.m. The next meeting of the Orange County Fire Authority Board of Directors will be on Thursday, May 25, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

  
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Maria D. Huizar, CMC  
Clerk of the Authority