

**CITY OF SAN RAFAEL FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE COMMISSION MEETING**

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
March 9, 2022**

VIA ZOOM

Present:

Chair Steve Mizroch
Vice Chair Larry Luckham
Nadine Atieh
Thomas Weathers
Ken Johnson
David Fonkalsrud, Alternate
Stan Burford, Alternate
Fire Chief Darin White

Absent:

None

Chair Mizroch called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

1. OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC EXPRESSION
None.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 9, 2022

Commissioner Luckham pointed out at the end of the meeting we had skipped Approval of the Minutes in the beginning of the meeting. Commissioner Luckham moved to approve; Commissioner Burford seconded; approved unanimously

3. FIRE FOUNDATION

Chair Mizroch reported the fire Foundation would donate \$2,500 to Firefighters without Borders, led by San Rafael FF/PM Angel Landaverde, as they will be deploying in early April to Guatemala to train local firefighters on fire suppression, ladders, extrication and more. Total in account is approximately \$96,000.

There is research underway for the purchase of an audio system for Station 52 so those in attendance of meetings can hear clearly.

In April, there will be a decision made on the delivery of Breakfast to the San Rafael Fire Stations (18 Bags for 18 Shifts) at approximately \$50 to \$60 per bag.

4. HISTORIC SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair Mizroch had nothing to report.

5. CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER REPORTS

Note: This meeting was the last meeting with Dr. Steve Mizroch as Chairperson. Doctor Mizroch a resident of San Rafael since 1979, highly regarded practitioner Internal Medicine and Geriatrics at Kaiser San Rafael for over 30 years and a long time member/Chair of the San Rafael Fire Commission.

Commissioner Luckham – With the utmost respect congratulated Steve for a term well served and thanked him for his service.

Commissioner Weathers – Congratulated Dr. Mizroch on his term as Chairperson. Proposed a resolution for the San Rafael Fire Commission to issue a position statement advocating for the mandatory vaccination of all fire and EMS personnel against the COVID-19 virus by an FDA approved COVID-19 vaccine.

Chairperson Mizroch – supported engaging the entire membership of the Commission in a discussion and backed Commissioner Weathers for bringing forth the topic.

Fire Chief White - commented that the County Wide Mandate is what must be followed without exception: <https://coronavirus.marinhhs.org/020922-FirstResponderVaccinations#:~:text=Effective%20April%2015%2C%2022%2C%20all,e>.

Chief White provided an excellent breakdown of the challenges associated with this issue. Specifically, he discussed the conflict of when someone is responsible for the safety of the public, yet they could pose a threat to the same public they are serving. This decision is the Fire personnel's right to privacy under the California Constitution. It was Chief White's recommendation the San Rafael Fire Commission stay away from this controversial topic.

Chief White's logical analysis continued by addressing the potential of another stronger more deadly variant developing in the future, at that point the SRFD would be "playing catchup". Other concerns are the fear of the unknown and religious convictions of the FF/EMS, which could render the Fire Commission in direct confrontation with the fire department. He mentioned this concern is a small percentage of the workforce and the County will make the appropriate decision. He concluded with "going forward in order to become a San Rafael firefighter, a person must be vaccinated".

Commissioner Luckham: - Outlined this topic is personal, involves labor and management, and has become political. The San Rafael Fire Commission has no medical experience (other than Dr. Mizroch). We are not a political enterprise and should stay out of this discussion.

Commissioner Fonkalsrud – Pointed out the Fire Commission has a solid relationship with the Fire Department, which need to be maintained. He was in favor of following the guidelines of the State of California and Marin County and thought it best not to issue a Proclamation on this topic.

Commission Johnson – Agreed with the comments of the Fire Chief and thought it best not to issue a Proclamation on this topic and to follow the guidelines of the State of California and Marin County.

Commissioner Burford – Agreed with Fire Chief White. He appreciated Commissioner Weathers bringing this issue up to the Commission for the possibility of a Proclamation. He believes vaccination is important for those in public safety, and there may be a manner in which to word a Proclamation so as not to offend; however at this point he sides with holding off on a Proclamation.

Commissioner Atieh Hade – Commented this is a highly charged topic and at this point, she was in favor of supporting the firefighters. She had a concern a Proclamation could be misconstrued and did not want to give any potential wrong impression.

Commissioner Weathers – Thanked the entire Fire Commission for their position statements and agreed it was best to stay out of the discussion surrounding mandatory vaccination of all fire and EMS personnel against the COVID-19.

6. FIRE CHIEF REPORT

Vehicle Fire in San Rafael - From Fire Suppression -

On the afternoon of Tuesday March 8th, E57 (A-shift) responded to 1500 Los Gamos, parking lot of the YMCA. A fire started in a Lexus SUV which developed into a fully involved fire in the engine compartment/interior of the vehicle, spreading to a neighboring parked vehicle. E57 was able to stop the fire before any other vehicles or property were damaged. Fortunately, no persons were injured.

We briefly discussed new parking signage work in San Rafael with Mary Skramstad, Wildfire Mitigation Specialist

Chief White reiterated what Mayor Kate had said in a speech about Dr. Mizroch the day before the Commission meeting. He thanked Steve for a lifetime of support for the Fire Service. Chief White's comments about his initial reluctance to work with a Fire Commission until he met Chairperson Mizroch were heartfelt.

Every Commissioner had kind words of thanks and gratitude for Chairperson Dr. Steve Mizroch.

Chairperson Mizroch – Spoke eloquently about his time working with and serving the San Rafael Fire Department and the Fire Foundation. Steve has worked with five Fire Chiefs:

Fire Chief Robert Marcucci

Fire Chief Bruce Martin

Fire Chief John Montenero

Fire Chief Christopher Gray

Fire Chief Darin White

Never has the Fire Commission had an adversarial position with the Department, always supportive and hopes things remain in that fashion. Steve signed off by quoting Buddha “Change is never painful, only resistance to change is painful.”

Commissioner Fonkalsrud made a great suggestion about having an article written in the Marin IJ about the commitment to the San Rafael Community and the Fire Service by Dr. Mizroch. Steve was in agreement as long as the article helped support the San Rafael Fire Department.

Council Member Rachel Kurtz, who was elected in December 2021 to the District 4 seat would like to meet the Fire Commission and may sit in on our next meeting.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Mizroch asked if there was anything further from anyone, and there being nothing further, adjourned the meeting at 5:04 p.m.

