

# **Cromwell Fire District**

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FIRE DISTRICT OFFICE  
WATER DIVISION

FIRE DEPARTMENT  
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

## **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

### **Fire and Water Divisions**

**Tuesday, August 20, 2019**

**7:00 PM**

**Coles Road Firehouse**

**105 Coles Road**

**Cromwell, CT**

The Commissioners of the Cromwell Fire District held their monthly Board of Commissioners' Meeting on Tuesday, August 20, 2019, at 7:00 PM, at the Coles Road Firehouse, 105 Coles Road, Cromwell, CT to discuss and act upon Fire and Water Division business.

Commissioners Lee Brow (President), Jason Hinnners, Robert Donohue, David Colligan, Mertie Terry, Allan Spotts and Charles Epstein attended. Also attending were Executive Director Julius Neto, Water Operations Manager Joseph Palmieri, Fire Chief Michael Terenzio, Ass't Chief EMS Robert McIntyre and Accountant Michael Alibrio from BlumShapiro.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM, by President Brow. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Brow. A moment of silence was observed for Capt. Bill LaFord from MA who fought a long battle with cancer.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Hinnners and unanimously approved to accept the Agenda as submitted

President Brow read the Rules for Public Comment at Commission meetings as noted on the bottom of the Agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Hinnners, seconded by Commissioner Spotts and unanimously approved to accept the Rules for Public Comment as read.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hinnners, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to give the President permission to have the leeway to shorten or lengthen the time limit for public comment depending on the topic during a special meeting where legal counsel is present because of the cost of Legal Counsel to be present.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments to report.

APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF  
JULY 16, 2019

A motion was made by Commissioner Hinnars, seconded by Commissioner Spotts and unanimously approved to accept the Board of Commissioners' Meeting minutes of July 16, 2019, as submitted.

APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF  
AUGUST 2, 2019

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Spotts and unanimously approved to accept the Special Board of Commissioners' Meeting minutes of August 2, 2019, as submitted.

READING OF COMMUNICATIONS & WRITTEN APPEALS TO THE BOARD

Commissioner Hinnars had 5 letters addressed to the Board that were read at this time. The letters were from the following citizens and/or firefighters: Ann Kaiser, Alan Dominy, Barry Wolmetz, Bill McKnight and Michael Zadrack. Copies are on file in the Fire District Office. Some letters were in support of Chief Terenzio and some were not.

REPORTS OF THE STAFF

- A. Executive Director. The Executive Director's report for July had been distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Neto began by reporting they are in the final stages of getting the \$3 million bond. It should be available somewhere around the 29<sup>th</sup> of August. He also reported that a couple of weeks ago the Fire Department had a visit from CONN OSHA. There were 8 bullet items to address. Four were immediately negated because they were not in their area of responsibility or valid within the Statutes. Four items were identified, a couple of them through an inspection. A formal report should be received within a few weeks. At that time the District will have an opportunity to evaluate and discuss the report. Mr. Neto thought the District did well on the report. There was nothing in the report that required immediate attention or stopping operations. He added that the 2018/2019 Fiscal year has ended. Mr. Alibrio has been processing last-minute invoices. There are no final numbers available, but it is a positive end result. There are sufficient funds that were not used to move to the General Fund. The District did not use all the money appropriated for the budget year. The money goes back to the General Fund and will be used for emergencies and/or next year's budget. Mr. Neto also reported that he has found the land owner of Holy Apostles. It is the Society of Missionary of Holy Apostles. They own the College's land where the District would like to put an antenna. Mr. Neto has a verbal commitment that they are going to allow the District to put an antenna on top of the old water tank. He has drafted a legal document which he hopes to get signed next week. Mr. Neto explained the importance of the antenna and communications for the District for public safety. They are well versed on the District's services. As soon as those documents are signed, the prep work can begin. Some main cables were removed out of the main tower in order to prep for the communications upgrade. Within the next 4 to 6 weeks, all the equipment will be removed from Room 3 to Room 1. There will be public safety, Cromwell's Police Department and Public Works in Room 1. The Cromwell Fire Department will be in Room 3. The site is being organized. They are also mapping all of the cables. Basic preliminary work is being done to identify all equipment there. This also identifies vendors and their role. The District is also reassessing the weight limitations. They

should be getting 15% more capacity of weight. Anytime that Sprint, T-Mobile, Verizon or AT&T add or take away, the District will require that they do a weight study and show how it will impact the tower. Commissioner Epstein asked about the OSHA complaint regarding the birds in the Court St. Firehouse. The Fire Chief and Executive Director were aware of this issue before it was identified by OSHA. Some quotes had been obtained. A purchase order was cut for the vendor Eliminate'um Pest Control. The District will be using "Guard'em" which is a solution that some universities around the State are using. It is new technology that is designed to mimic birds in distress. Once the birds sense there is distress, they will not approach a distressed situation. Another approach would be netting to prevent them from nesting. There is funding for the problem. The cost will be approximately \$2,800. If netting is required that cost would be \$7,000. The Executive Director let CONN OSHA know that whatever items are identified will be resolved for the long term. Mr. Neto added that Chevron sent the District a note. The District is a neighbor to their site by the river. That site will be remediated, and the company wanted to give the District a "heads up" that there may be more trucks in that area by the rotary park.

- B. Financial Report. The Financial Report for July had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Alibrio reported that it is the first month of the new fiscal year. Purchase orders are being processed, and some line items are showing they are over budget already. For the most part, they are for blanket purchase orders that cover the whole year. There isn't much else going on other than preparing for the audit. The auditors should be in next week for their preliminary field work. Commissioner Colligan asked if the ambulance billing was improving. There has become increased attention to that by the EMS staff making sure all the paperwork is completed, signatures are collected and everything is submitted in a timely fashion. Mr. Alibrio has not seen an improvement, but only because he has not had time to really evaluate the data and all the data has not been received.
- C. Fire Chief's Report. The Chief's Report for July had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. In addition to the Chief's report he added that the new staffing model continues to demonstrate that the District is on the right track. Calls are being answered the best that they can with available resources morning, noon and night; 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They have received plans for the project at the corner of Shunpike and Court Street, 186 Shunpike Rd. The plans are for a modified apartment complex from the old plans. The current drawings only show a three story building rather than a high rise. Right now there are no adverse effects that the Fire Department can identify that would impede their operations. The Chief reported that over the last week, the Fire Department has received another email from FEMA. One of the three grants that were submitted, they want the District to be sure the SAM.org (System for Awards Management) is up to date.
- D. Water Operations. The Operations Report for July had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Palmieri added that yesterday they completed water main flushing and hydrant maintenance. He stated it is looking good and was 1 ½ months ahead of schedule. There were two men working on that project. Regarding the VFD upgrade, Wells 1 and 2 are complete. The software was installed, and they are both up and running. Today they commissioned the VFD for Well 3. There are some issues with the flow. The controls are not picking up the flow so they could not put the chemicals in. Tomorrow they will be working on it first thing to get it up and running. Well 4 will be delayed by 3 or 4 days. The electricians are now at another job site, but should be back when the demo is ready. In the planning stages of this project

there was a discussion about air conditioning for the room. The item was left out because of the funding to do it. Mr. Palmieri feels that this needs to be done as soon as possible. The VFD's throw off a lot of heat. He has been in touch with Cromwell Energy and will be scheduling an appointment with them for pricing. They are interested in a small wall unit. The trucks and equipment are looking good. They had some routine maintenance done. Three new meters were installed this month for residential accounts. Eight meters were upgraded. Mr. Palmieri reported that it was a slow month for installs and upgrades. There was more flushing done. Two water services were repaired in the month of July. South St due to sewer repairs done last summer. A water service was replaced at 22 Elm Rd. There was some discussion regarding certain areas of town that need water main replacements, and how the Water Department will need to start planning for that project in terms of their budget.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hinnners, seconded by Commissioner Spotts and unanimously approved to accept the Reports of the Staff as submitted.

#### REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. District Operations. There was no meeting.
- B. Executive. There was no meeting.
- C. Fire Operations. A meeting was held on July 16, 2019. Minutes had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office.

A motion was made by Commissioner Donohue, seconded by Commissioner Hinnners and unanimously approved to accept the Fire Operations Committee meeting minutes of July 16, 2019, as submitted.

- 1. Communications Subcommittee. Commissioner Colligan reported that the information being reported tonight on antennas is part of a three year process that the District had previously paid for. The amount at the time was \$49,000, and the process included correcting past mistakes with licensing, etc. Commissioner Colligan also thanked the Executive Director and Mr. Alibrio for working on the bonding for this project. He realized there was a lot of work involved with it, and wanted to recognize those staff that helped with the bonding application.
- D. Pension. There was no meeting.
- E. Personnel Committee. A meeting was held on June 27, 2019. Minutes were not available at the last meeting. Minutes were available at this meeting. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office.

A motion was made by Commissioner Donohue, seconded by Commissioner Spotts and unanimously approved to accept the Personnel Committee meeting minutes of June 27, 2019, as submitted.

- F. Water Operations. The next meeting is scheduled for August 27, 2019.

#### BOARD APPOINTMENTS

There were no appointments to report.

### CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

- A. Report of the Town Council Liaison. Ms. Jennifer Donohue reported that there was no Council meeting this month. She was happy to bring any questions or concerns back to the Council for response. She did mention that there will be a special meeting next week in Executive Session to review the Town Manager's performance. The next Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 11, 2019.
- B. Reports of the Special Committees
1. Public Safety Tower Committee. There was no meeting.
  2. Safety/Building Committee. There was no meeting.

### NEW BUSINESS

- A. Commissioners' Comments. Commissioner Terry asked for explanation of some damage that was done by Eversource on the District property. This information was reported to the Commission. The damage that was done was located by the Chem Feed building. There were some low hanging wires that had been reported previously to Eversource by the District. During the previous two travelers Championships the poles were hit, creating the low hanging wires. Mr. Neto, Mr. Palmieri and Mr. Alvarado chased Eversource down to correct the problem at the time the poles were damaged because of the hanging wires. Eversource opted not to address the problem at that time. A week prior to the golf tournament this year, a garbage truck going through the area to pick up trash, hit the wires with the top of its truck. The District had informed Eversource one year prior to the garbage truck incident. It was clear that the District was not responsible for any of the damage or repairs. Mr. Palmieri also noted that the previous year, a bucket truck had hit the wires upon forgetting to lower the bucket before trying to exit the area. The contact with the wires caused the bucket truck to land on its side. Mr. Neto stated that the District provided All Waste, (the garbage company) with a lot of information because their Safety Director wanted to know for discussions they are having. This issue has become an ongoing problem that the Cromwell Fire District is having repeatedly. They wanted to verify that information. All Waste was looking at a \$26,000 bill. They will be taking Eversource on to deal with the issue so that they would not be dealing with that bill. Commissioner Epstein reported that he is the Judicial representative on the State EOC of which Eversource also has a representative. He offered to help research who the contact person is and follow up on the outcome of the situation. Mr. Palmieri added that the power was out for 15 hours during this time. A taller pole was installed which did help, but it is still low. 15 hours of diesel fuel was burned by the Fire District. Commissioner Colligan suggested that a strong letter be written to express the District's views on this problem.

Commissioner Spotts gave a shout out to the Fire Department/EMS for the job they did last Tuesday, August 13, 2019, with the accident on Rte. 91. Since carrying a radio, he is amazed to know what really goes on and how often there is more than one call happening at the same time. He stated it was an eye opener. Commissioner Epstein also discussed the accident adding that there was over an hour of extrication. It was off the highway, down an embankment. Traffic was backed up for miles. The people there did an outstanding job. President Brow also commented that he was on scene with the Executive Director. He observed some issues with apparatus that will be brought up at the next Fire Operations Committee meeting. He added that if a Commissioner is not an active member of the Fire Department, the only place they should at any emergency scene, is the command post. Other

than that, they should not be anywhere else. The Commissioners are not covered under Workers' Comp. or any liability insurance.

B. Budgetary Adjustments. There were no adjustments to report.

C. Approval of Contracts/Contractors. There were no contracts or contractors to report.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Prior to any public comment being brought forward, President Brow read the Rules for Public Comment for those that had come in late and did not hear the first reading of the rules at the beginning of this meeting.

There were no public comments to report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

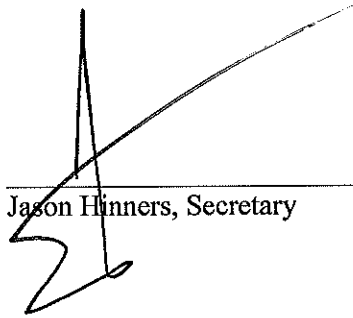
There were no items to discuss in Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Spotts, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 PM.

ATTEST:

Nancy Deegan  
Recording Secretary  
8-28-19

  
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Jason Hinners, Secretary