

Cromwell Fire District

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FIRE DISTRICT OFFICE
WATER DIVISION

FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Personnel Committee Meeting

Tuesday, August 10, 2021

6:30 PM

Coles Road Firehouse
105 Coles Road
Cromwell, CT

Present: Commissioners Mertie Terry (Chairwoman), David Colligan and President Lee Brow. Also attending were Executive Director Julius Neto, Fire Chief Jason Balletto, Communication Manager Justin Lonergan and Commissioners Robert Donohue and Charles Epstein.

- I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM, by Chairwoman Terry.
- II. Approval of Agenda. A motion was made by President Brow, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the Agenda as submitted.
- III. Public Comment. Justin Lonergan thanked the Committee for having faith in him and approving his full-time position as Communication Manager. He looks forward to working with everyone in his new full-time position.
- IV. Old Business
 - A. Update on Water Department Maintainer III Position. The Executive Director reported that the Water Division has not found any candidates for the Maintainer III position. They have two possible candidates that they will interview when Mr. Palmieri returns from vacation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Brow and unanimously approved to table the Maintainer III position discussion.
 - B. Evaluation of the Executive Director. The President suggested that the Committee do what they have done in the past and have the President sit down with the Executive Director, review goals and objectives and possibly negotiate an extension to or a new contract.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Terry and unanimously approved to allow the President to sit down with the Executive Director to negotiate a new or extension of his contract with a review of goals and objectives.

- C. Temporary Acting Assistant Fire Chief. The Executive Director noted that this is old business from the last Committee meeting. The Committee requested the Chief to follow up with the two candidates. At the last meeting Chief Balletto presented two names to the Committee. He sat down with both individuals, and they are both interested in the position. Those individuals are Andrew Cooke and Brian Petrucelli. The Chief felt that both individuals were very well qualified for the position. If he had to make a decision based on the experience and years in the fire service, he would recommend Brian Petrucelli. This is a temporary acting position.

There are still a couple of issues that need to be discussed in Executive Session. The Personnel Committee will need to discuss how to proceed with a process for a permanent replacement going forward. The Executive Director expects this to be a 2 – 3 month process. Issues to be discussed are testing, who qualifies for testing, etc.

President Brow had concerns that both candidates are officials in their respective unions. He wanted to know how that would be addressed. Chief Balletto and the Executive Director plan on sitting down with the candidate and drafting an MOU. Chief Balletto and the Executive Director have already had discussions with the individuals. They have decided to draft an MOU to outline the job objectives and have the detail through the Chief's office on the Fire side. The MOU would be the same thing they did with another Dispatcher during the COVID protocol. The arrangements had been agreed upon by both sides. The MOU would cover a maximum of 120 days for this position. They will utilize that person until a decision is made going forward regarding a permanent Assistant Chief of Training.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brow, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and approved 2 to 1 to authorize the Fire Chief and the Executive Director to offer the temporary Acting Assistant Fire Chief position to Mr. Brian Petrucelli with the stipulation that an MOU is drafted, approved by the District's labor attorney and signed off to cover a time period not to exceed 120 days. This will be forwarded to the full Board of Commissioners for their approval at their August 17, 2021, monthly meeting. Commissioner Colligan abstained.

President Brow requested that this item also be fast-tracked as the Committee had also done for the Fire Chief's position, so they can start deciding and planning the testing/hiring procedures for the Ass't Fire Chief position.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Brow and approved 2 to 1 to have the President and Executive Director move forward to get the testing/hiring process done and to forward their results to the Personnel Committee for a recommendation. Commissioner Colligan abstained.

- D. Crossover Positions. There is a group of dispatchers that have been allowed by the Commission to come over and fill the open shifts on the fire side. It was going to be a short-term solution. They need to create some more parameters and more research to present a long term, possible solution. Management is not prepared to do that.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Brow and unanimously approved to table this item.

V. New Business

- A. Discussion and Decision on Hiring Part-Time Dispatcher. The Communications Manager discussed the issue of hiring. They have had an open part-time communication position for some time. They have not pursued filling it because they have not had a need. Overtime has been limited. Recently they have had a part-time dispatcher resign their position. There is another full-time dispatcher who is eligible to retire. In anticipation of that, Mr. Lonergan wanted to replace the part-time dispatcher that resigned. That dispatch position has been held open in order for that to occur. They are trying to keep overtime low and maintain a core of dispatchers within the Communication Center.

They had advertised for the position and received 6 applicants. They interviewed 4 with a panel of 3. There were 3 candidates that came out on top. Mr. Lonergan wanted to introduce two candidates to be acted upon for hiring into the part-time position. One will be effective immediately, and the second one will be held off for two weeks just so they are not being trained simultaneously. There is only so much room in the Communication Center. The first candidate is Corey Mosdale. He is a former dispatcher from KX Colchester. The second candidate is Robert Ferone, a long-time member of the Fire Department. He is a current dispatcher for the State Police and a per diem dispatcher at the Cromwell Police Department. Both candidates are suitable for part-time dispatcher positions in the Cromwell Communication Center. The Executive Director noted that the hiring process was thorough and inclusive. He supports the Communication Manager's recommendation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Brow and unanimously approved to authorize the Communications Manager to hire Corey Mosdale and Robert Ferone for the part-time Dispatcher positions in the Communication Center.

- B. Executive Session. A motion was made by President Brow, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to enter into Executive Session at 6:53 PM for a discussion and update on the CHRO complaint and other pending litigation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Brow and unanimously approved to adjourn Executive Session at 7:30 PM.

- VI. Commissioners' Comments. There were no comments to report.

- VII. Adjournment. There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Brow, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mertie Terry, Chairwoman

Nancy Deegan
Recording Secretary, 8-27-21