

Cromwell Fire District

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FIRE DISTRICT OFFICE
WATER DIVISION

FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Apparatus Committee

Tuesday, September 28, 2021

5:30 PM

Coles Road Firehouse
105 Coles Road
Cromwell, CT

Present: Commissioners Jason Hinnners (Chairman), David Colligan, Robert McIntyre and Charles Epstein, Fire Chief Balletto, Executive Director Julius Neto, Water Manager Joseph Palmieri, Ass't Fire Chief Jason Brade, Firefighter Lt. William McKnight, Firefighter Lt. Brett Hallden, Firefighter Alan Dominy and Commissioner Robert Donohue.

- I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM, by Chairman Hinnners.
- II. Approval of Agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Hinnners and unanimously approved to accept the Agenda as submitted.
- III. Public Comment. There were no public comments to report.
- IV. Update on Apparatus Replacement Needs for the Fire Department. The Chief began by noting that 4C is out of service again. The electrical system is not working properly. They are having it serviced with Lifeline. Engine 2 will be going out of service so it is hoped that Tack 4 will be back in service by then. Tack 4 had some work done on its lead springs. There is an issue with the wheel well on the driver side. There are also a couple of leaks on the side. They have not had any contact with Florida. Chris Logan reached out to them again to see what the status is with Ladder 1. They have not heard back and are waiting patiently. Apparatus continue to break down. It keeps getting worse. Mr. Logan's vehicle is also not in great shape. A new transmission is needed. With a new transmission, the vehicle could last another 3 years. The Chief and the Executive Director gave Mr. Logan the option of getting a new vehicle or using something else. Mr. Logan thought that because of the condition of the Fire Department's fleet, he would rather have the money spent on the fleet rather than his vehicle.

The Chief does not know how much longer the fleet is going to last. He hasn't seen anything like this since 2006/2008 when he was at the New Haven Fire Department. At that time they lost 4 apparatus and had to start borrowing things. The Chief stated that the Committee needs to make a decision about what they are going to do moving forward. Pierce will be visiting the week of Oct. 11 with the apparatus from North Carolina. Staff are welcome to be able to look at it as many times as they want. If it doesn't meet Cromwell's needs, they can go into production in January or February.

The Chief was asked to reach out to Frazer and AEV which he did. He distributed copies of a new quote for the ambulance which was the one that came to the firehouse. The Chief was able to get the price down to \$249,000. They will put all the electronics and powerload into it. All they will have to do is take the powerload off the old ambulance and put it into the new ambulance. This ambulance is a F550 diesel. There is an \$8,000 difference if they decide to go with gas. The pickup and delivery time is 180 to 200 days. The Chief explained that Eastford has a program where they will come to the firehouse, pick up the ambulance for repairs and drive it out to Eastford and leave the Fire Department a loaner.

The Chief had a slide presentation to illustrate the AEV ambulance. He explained the different areas of the ambulance. The cost is roughly \$230,000 and it is made in Texas. The final inspections will have to be done in Texas which means the District will have to absorb the cost to travel to Texas. Firefighter Dominy thought that the AEV is a bigger vehicle. They are set up similar to Lifeline's boxes. Frazer will allow them to arrange the compartments the way they want to. The AEV quote was for the exact same ambulance that came to the firehouse. The Chief noted that the City of New Britain had all Frazers in their fleet of ambulances. They just purchased 4 AEV's switching from Frazers. Comfort and storage are better with the AEV. AEV is closest to what Cromwell currently has for a box.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding what ambulance to choose. They agreed that there was a lot to consider. There were good things and bad with each manufacturer. The Chief stressed that the Committee needs to make a decision so they can move forward. They also discussed whether or not they need to go out to bid. The Chief has already received three different quotes from 3 different vendors. They are Frazer/Type 1, AEV/Type 1 and Lifeline/Type 1. There was discussion on whether or not a state bid needs to be done. The Executive Director suggested that we check with the vendor to find out if they are State bid companies.

The Chairman asked for guidance on the next steps to purchase an ambulance. Mr. Neto explained the bonding procedures. Within 2 months of when the Committee gives the Executive Director the authority to proceed with bonding, there should be funding available. The whole bonding package needs to be finalized to include all the items to be purchased.

The Executive Director reminded everyone that a Town meeting needs to be scheduled after a package is put together and presented to the Board for approval. The Town is the final approval for a bonding package totaling \$2 million for capital improvement projects. The Chief added that both AEV and Pierce are part of the State system. The Chief was looking for direction on next steps. He was willing to do whatever the Committee asked to progress to the next level.

The Committee wanted prices. The numbers projected by the Chief were: \$250,000 for the ambulance, \$750,000 for a rescue pumper and \$550,000 for a fire engine. He would like to get the fire rescue engine at a cheaper price, but the Chief is committed to these prices. \$1.6 million is the total for the Fire Department vehicles. The goal was not to exceed \$2 million.

The Water Department needs will not exceed \$250,000. Requested are 2 trucks, mini-excavator and attachments and trailer. Mr. Palmieri is in the process of obtaining quotes for the strobe and exterior lighting package for the leak truck. It was noted that with Mr. Palmieri's equipment and vehicles, the \$1.6 million for the Fire Department and the equipment the Fire Department would need, they still would fall below \$2 million.

The Executive Director discussed the option of leasing. The option would be to use the \$250,000 that has been set aside for the purchase of apparatus as a down payment for a lease on the Pierce apparatus so that it is not taken by another Department. Once the money is received from the bonding process, they could pay off the lease. The other option is to order and wait 12 to 18 months to receive the apparatus.

The Committee needs to make a couple of decisions. One is what does the Committee want from the vendors. They need to make a list of what they want. From that the Committee needs to make recommendations to the full Board at their next meeting. Simultaneously the Executive Director will be working with the Bond Council and Finance Office to discuss numbers. The Committee needs to make some decisions and move them to the full Commission. As soon as the full Commission votes on a decision, there needs to be a Town meeting the first or second week of December. The taxpayers will need to make the final decision.

The Chief is going to reach out to Firematic tomorrow to get the specs per the State bid system and HGAC system for the rescue/pumper if they have to order one and the specs for a typical engine as the backup for Engine 2.

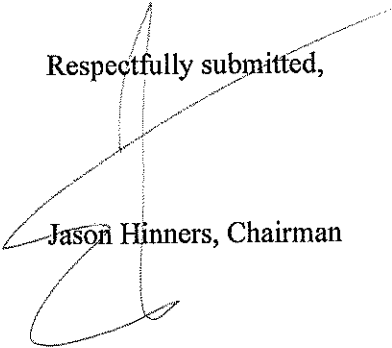
A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to go with the Eastford AEV ambulance, the Pierce rescue/pumper and a Fire Engine to be determined in the future along with the vehicles and equipment the Water Department is requesting. The Water Department is requesting 2 trucks, a leak truck, a mini-excavator with attachments and trailer not to exceed \$250,000. This information needs to be put together in a package that includes items and prices to present to the full Board of Commissioners for approval.

The Executive Director recommended that the Committee come up with one list with preferred vendor and price for every piece of equipment they want so it can be consolidated into one document. Mr. Neto would be able to use the document for the financial part of the equation. He asked the division heads to prepare that. Mr. Palmieri is trying to get a quote for a generator possibly on the leak truck.

V. Commissioners' Comments. There were no comments to report.

VI. Adjournment. There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,


Jason Hinners, Chairman

Nancy Deegan
Recording Secretary