

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 14, 2021

5:00 PM

Coles Road Firehouse
105 Coles Road
Cromwell, CT

Present: Commissioners Jason Hiners (Chairman), Charles Epstein, David Colligan and Robert McIntyre. Also attending were: Fire Chief Jason Balletto, Local 4662 IAFF member Lt. Brett Hallden, Firefighter Alan Dominy and Water Division Maintainer Eric Roberts. Absent were: Executive Director Julius Neto, Mechanic Chris Logan and Water Operations Manager Joe Palmieri.

- I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM, by Chairman Hiners.
- II. Approval of Agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as submitted.
- III. Public Comment. There were no public comments to report.
- IV. Discussion of Apparatus Replacement Needs for the Fire Department. Chief Balletto reported there are two Pierce apparatus that are available for viewing. He went with Ass't Chief Brade and Chris Logan to look at the 4 compartment Pierce rescue that was in Vernon. One will be going into production come January. There is another one in North Carolina with 3,000 miles on it. There is also one in production at a price of \$720,000. The price for the one in North Carolina is \$675,000 to \$690,000. The Chief contacted Pierce to see if they could take a trip to North Carolina to check out the apparatus. He discussed this with the Executive Director and Commissioner Colligan. He requested permission from the Committee to take a road trip to North Carolina to view the Pierce apparatus. He wanted to take the trip with Chris Logan and possibly Alan Dominy. It would be a 2-day trip.

The Chief also took a trip to visit the Frazer ambulance in New Britain. The Chief reported that the Frazer did not fit Cromwell's needs whatsoever. He went with Commissioner Epstein, Alan Dominy and Megan Petrucci to evaluate the EMS component. The Chief was shocked that for a fire/ambulance the vehicle did not meet Cromwell's specifications as Wallingford's 2018 version. He contacted Frazer to see if there is a different specification for it. They did speak with a paramedic and the Chief from Wallingford off the record to get some feedback about the ambulance. There was not a lot of positive feedback. The Chief also spoke to some people from New Britain. They are getting rid of their Frazer ambulances and going to AEV. One issue the New Britain staff explained was that all Frazer ambulances

are built in Texas, and they are not built for the Northeast. Hoses and piping tend to fail because of the cold weather. AEV reached out to the Chief again, but their timeline is getting smaller. If Cromwell were to order something now, it would not be available until December of 2022.

The Chief discussed his “homework” assignment which was to decide what was in the Department’s inventory and what was not. There was a discrepancy that there was either too much equipment or not enough equipment. One of the documents the Chief distributed was what is on Tack 4 for inventory right now. The Chief could not say what could be gotten rid of and what could not because he does not drive that piece and does not know what staff uses. He knows that all the air bags have to be replaced. They only have two pieces of stabilization equipment which are rescue jacks (broken), the hurst tool which is very old, and other tools that are also old. The items highlighted on the sheet are items that need replacement.

He distributed another document that listed and illustrated rescue equipment, storage space and how equipment is stored. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. The Chief reviewed the components listed. The Chief discussed cribbing and how much is needed for a vehicle. Cromwell does not have a lot of the components that go with cribbing that is why the Chief would like to look at a 4-compartment rescue. Airbags were reviewed. Struts were also explained. This is a typical interstate highway apparatus. Three saws are what is on the apparatus right now. The battery-operated tools were priced out. The Chief discussed the Little Giant ladder. He would like to get rid of the yellow fiberglass ladders on the apparatus now. They are very heavy. He explained how chains are important, grip hoists, air boxes and air hoses.

The Chief was asked to determine what needed to be on Tack 4 and what needed to be replaced. The Chief checked Tack 4 today. He distributed his must have list which was combined with his would like to have list. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. The must have items were highlighted in yellow and discussed. They were: air bags, Interstate Motorway VSK, battery and hydraulic cutters and spreaders PCU50, telescopic Ram, everything listed under rope equipment and confined space equipment. He also priced out pumps electric and gas.

The total cost of everything on page 1 of the Chief’s replacement list was \$135,840. \$8,150 is the cost to replace all the air bags that are in place now and the master air bag box. The Vehicle Stabilization Kit that was on Rescue 1 with adding 2 hydrofusions was a price of \$30,300. The Chief priced out some extrication equipment, but he was not sure what the Committee or his personnel want to do. Battery operated cutters and spreaders. He and Lt. Hallden thought that the best opportunity would be to go with battery operated and hydraulic equipment. The total cost for extrication equipment is \$135,840, rope equipment is \$12,530 and confined space equipment \$135,860.

The Chief also announced that the Department received the grant for the 5 gas meter and a 3 gas. This will be helpful for the confined space training. The Chief will be going up to Greensboro, MA to see what their 4 door, rescue compartment looks like. He will be taking Acting Ass’t Chief Petrucelli with him. The Chief asked the Committee for permission to forward his request to the Fire Operations Committee to travel to North Carolina to see the Pierce apparatus. If he receives approval from the Fire Operations Committee, he would like to bring it before the full Board of Commissioners.

A motion was made by Commissioner McIntyre, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to tentatively approve the trip to North Carolina and forward the request to the Fire Operations Committee to fully approve this travel once a price has been determined.

The Chief wanted to know what direction the Committee wanted to go with the ambulance. Commissioner Colligan and the rest of the Committee wanted to finalize the plan for the apparatus with a final price based on the Chief's wish list and want list. The Chief will also reach out to the three ambulance companies, Frazer, AEV and Lifeline. He will get up to date specifications for Fire Department ambulances and see what they look like.

Eric Roberts discussed the needs for the Water Department. He had more information to add to the specifications he presented at the last meeting. The pick-up truck total price was quoted as \$49,000. Mr. Palmieri wants to add a utility body on it at a price of \$14,000. The other specifications for this are: a gas truck, a super cab 250, 4 X 4 with a plow on it. 8 ft bed, Mr. Palmieri is waiting on quotes for lighting. Those quotes were for the leak truck as well as the pick-up. The Committee will wait for Mr. Palmieri to provide final information and prices at the next meeting.

The Deputy Chief's vehicle was discussed to determine if it should be included in the package being prepared by the Committee. The Chief is going to check out the State bid system and the State auction. The Chief from Rocky Hill FD just purchased an Assistant Chiefs' vehicle using the State bid list, and the price was \$6,700. It has very limited damage. This would be instead of leasing or buying a new vehicle. He would like to have Chris Logan with him when he looks into these things.

As the Committee is getting the bond package ready the Chief explained his priorities in terms of replacement. The first item is the replacement of Tack 4 and ambulance 4A. Immediately following that will be Engine 2. Once those are in service, he would like to take Engine 1 and make it a training apparatus.

The Committee decided that the next meeting of the Apparatus Committee would be Tuesday, Sept. 28, 2021, at 5:30 PM, at the Coles Road Firehouse.

- V. Commissioners' Comments. Commissioner Colligan thinks that things are moving in the right direction. He feels that the Committee needs to finalize all the data they received along with pricing in order to proceed with preparing for bonding. Commissioner McIntyre also thought things were moving in the right direction. He feels that everything needs to be done in a timely manner. He thanked the Chief for all his work. The Chief plans on going for an AFG grant this year. There is \$4 billion available starting in November. The District should be contacting Rep. Christie Carpino for help. She has provided support for the Fire District in the past. Chairman Hiners also thanked Chief Balletto for all of his hard work to prepare for these meetings. Commissioner Epstein stated as has everyone else that we have been kicking the can down the road for a long time. Everyone is doing as much as they can but everyone needs to keep in mind that the truck the members are driving in right now has a short life expectancy. The Committee needs to keep moving forward.

- VI. Adjournment. There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner McIntyre and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 5:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Hiners, Chairman

Nancy Deegan
Recording Secretary

DRAFT