

**CROMWELL FIRE DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
BY-LAWS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE**

Adopted *12/18/2023*.  
*Effective January 01, 2024*

**Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Cromwell Fire District is to support the preservation of life and public health, conservation of property, enforcement of applicable codes and standards, and to supply high-quality water for human consumption and firefighting. The Board carries out this mission by ensuring that professional quality fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical services, fire investigation and code enforcement, public safety telecommunications, and water supply services are provided to the Town of Cromwell and other stakeholders by the District's Fire Department and Water Division through the management of the Board, and by collaborating with neighboring utilities and mutual aid partners.

**Article I**

**Name:**

- A. The corporate name of this District shall be the Cromwell Fire District.

**Article II**

**Location:**

- A. In accordance with the Special Acts and Special Laws, also referred to as the District Charter, the geographical boundaries of the Cromwell Fire District shall be coterminous with those of the Town of Cromwell, Connecticut.

**Article III**

**Definitions:**

- A. The following terms as used herein shall have the meanings ascribed thereto.
1. **"District"** refers to the Cromwell Fire District.
  2. **"Board"** refers to the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Cromwell Fire District;
  3. **"District Charter"** refers to the Special Act No. 220 of the January, 1927 session of the Connecticut General Assembly, as amended from time to time.
  4. **"The Executive Committee"** refers to the committee comprised of the Board President, Vice President, and Secretary/District Clerk.

- D. Notice of the elections for Commissioner with a Non-Political reminder of the date, time and place of the Annual Elections for Fire Commissioners shall be placed on the Fire Departments electronic signs, printed media and the Fire Districts web site.
- E. The District will follow in relevant part, Connecticut General Statute 9-167(a) minority political party representation. Connecticut General Statutes 9-167(a) currently provides for that a maximum of 6 of the 9 Commissioners may be of the same political party, as registered with the Town of Cromwell at the time of submitting a letter of intent, representing 2/3 of the total number of Commissioners.

### Article V

#### **Duties of Commissioners:**

- A. The Commissioners shall superintend the concerns of the District and shall adjust and settle all claims against the District and draw on the Treasurer for their payment.
  - 1. All checks drawn on District funds shall require two (2) signatures of any of the four Board Officers duly approved.**
- B. At a special meeting of the Board to be held directly following the Annual Meeting of the District for the election of members to the Board, the members of the Board shall elect from amongst themselves the following four (4) Board Officers by paper ballot:
  - 1. President,
  - 2. Vice President,
  - 3. Secretary/District Clerk,
  - 4. Treasurer.
- C. The term of each officer shall commence with such meeting and terminate on the date of the election of the members to the Board the next following year.
- D. In the event of a vacancy in a Board Office, the members of the Board, at the next regular monthly meeting, or at a special meeting called for such purpose prior to such regular meeting, shall elect from amongst themselves a member to fill the remaining term of such office.
- E. The election of the above mentioned Board Officers shall be done by written ballot following the nomination for each specific Board Office.
- F. In the event of a vacancy of a Commissioner's position from any cause prior to the expiration of his/her term, the President of the Board shall call a meeting of the Voters of the District to elect a Commissioner to fill the unexpired portion of said term. Such District Meeting shall be held within sixty (60) days of the determination by the Board of Commissioners of the existence of such vacancy, in accordance with the terms set forth of article IV B.

2. Following the meeting of the District fixing the annual tax rate, prepare a rate bill apportioning to each property owner within the District such property owner's proportionate share of such taxes, and deliver such rate bill to the Treasurer.
3. Maintain or caused to be maintained an accurate list of the Voters of the District, as provided by the Register of Voters by the Town of Cromwell.
4. Be a member of the Executive Committee.
5. Be able to sign checks drawn on all District Funds.
6. Be the depository of any and all recommended/suggested By-laws changes.
7. Have all authority, powers, and duties of the President whenever the President and Vice President are both unavailable or unable to perform the duties of the President.

**D. The Treasurer shall:**

1. Have charge of the collection and payment of all monies of the District, under such rules and regulations as the Board may prescribe.
2. Be able to sign all checks drawn on District funds.
3. Oversee receipt and investment of all monies of the District in accordance with such guidelines as the Board may prescribe.
4. Have a quarterly meeting with the Executive Director and the Finance Manager in preparation of the annual budget for submission to the Board and voters.
5. Oversee maintenance of the financial records of the District.
6. Exercise such powers as provided to towns and tax collectors by the Connecticut General Statutes to collect and enforce the payment of District taxes.
7. Coordinate with the Executive Committee of the Board and the Executive Director for the annual audit of the District's financial records.
8. Have all authority, powers, and duties of the President whenever the President, Vice President, and Secretary are unavailable or unable to perform the duties of the President.

**Article VII**

**Removal of a Board Officer:**

- A. Should a majority of the elected Commissioners have just cause to remove a Board Officer before the one-year term is up, for dereliction of the duties of their appointed office, as listed in Article VI A-D, a majority vote of the whole board to remove and elect a new officer to finish the term may take place at any regular or special board meeting. Nothing in this section shall affect said Commissioner's membership on the Commission itself.

**Article VIII**

**Annual Meeting/Elections:**

- A. The District shall hold its Annual Meeting/Elections on the first Monday in October each year.

**1. Schedule**

- a. The regular monthly meeting of the Board shall be held on the third Tuesday of each month. In accordance with the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act, Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-200, et seq, notice of said regular meetings shall be filed with the Secretary of State and posted as required.
- b. Each regular monthly meeting of the Board shall start at 6:00 p.m. and adjourn not later than 9:00 p.m., unless the Board by a two-thirds majority of Commissioners participating and voting extends the adjournment hour, but not later than midnight.
- c. If the date of a regular monthly meeting of the Board falls upon a legal holiday, it shall be held on the next following business day whenever possible.
- d. If the President determines that a regular monthly Board meeting must be postponed due to inclement weather or other circumstances, the meeting will be reposted and conducted as a Special Meeting within five business days.

**2. Agenda**

- a. The agenda for each regular meeting of the Board, accompanied by the written reports of the standing committees and any other supporting material, shall be delivered to each Commissioner on the Thursday preceding such a meeting.
- b. By two-thirds vote of those Commissioners present and voting at a Board meeting, any item received after the deadline for inclusion on the agenda may be acted upon and be considered a part of the agenda of such regular meeting of the Board.

**3. Order of Business at regular monthly meetings of the Board shall be at a minimum as follows:**

- a. Call to Order
- b. Pledge of Allegiance
- c. Approval of Agenda
- d. Public Comment
- e. Report of Town's Liaison
- f. Reading and Approval of Prior Minutes
- g. Reading of Communications and Written Appeals
- h. Reports of the Executive Director, Finance Department, the Fire Department Chief, and the Water Operations Manager
- i. Reports of Committees
- j. Appointments
- k. Consideration of Old Business
- l. Introduction and Consideration of New Business
- m. Commissioners' Comments
- n. Public Comment (As needed)
- o. Executive Session, as needed and shall be pre-approved prior to the approval of the agenda
- p. Adjournment

**B. Votes:**

1. All votes by Commissioners shall be by verbal "Aye" or "Nay", and the vote of each member shall be recorded. In cases where there are no conflicting "Ayes" or "Nays", the Secretary/District Clerk shall record the vote as unanimous unless a member who did not cast an audible vote request that such member's vote be recorded otherwise.

Article XIII

**Committees of the Board of Commissioners:**

- A. Meetings.** Commissioners who are assigned as the Chair of a committee are expected to hold all scheduled meetings of their committee unless exigent circumstances exist that would cause a need to cancel it. Committees with standing agenda items shall not cancel more than two consecutive meetings. The Chair of the committee shall notify the Vice-Chair, as soon as practical, when he/she will not be able to attend said meeting. It shall be the duty of the Vice-Chair to run the meeting as scheduled when the Chair is unavailable.
- B. Commissioners who are not assigned to a committee and wish to attend that committee's meeting may do so by following these rules of order:**
1. Any Commissioner may attend a committee meeting for a committee or sub-committee they are not a member of, provided that they attend only for the purpose of gaining knowledge about the committee or agenda as posted, and they shall be recognized as members of the public only.
  2. They shall not speak on any item presented, nor offer opinion during the sub-committee's or committee's meeting, unless recognized by the Committee Chair, and shall have no voting powers.
  3. If questions arise during the meeting that need an answer or clarification, the Commissioner shall reduce the question to writing and submit it to the Committee Chair for action.
- C. The Executive Committee** shall be made up of the President, Vice President and the Secretary/District Clerk as stated in Article VI above.
1. No member of the Executive Committee shall be appointed as the Chair of The Water Operations Committee.
  2. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the appointments of the Standing Committees membership and Board appointments.
  3. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the appointments of all Special Committees membership when needed and shall appoint, and may remove, the members and a chairman, and shall determine the duration of such committee's existence.
    - a. Each special committee shall have four (4) voting Commissioners, and no more than the same number of non-commission members, when needed. The non-commission members shall serve in an advisory capacity only, with the Tower committee being the one exception. All members of the Tower Committee shall be voting members.
    - b. Each special committee may elect from amongst its membership such other officers as it deems appropriate.
    - c. Each such special committee shall report to the full Board.
    - d. Each special committee shall exercise no powers or duties other than the review or investigation of the matter so directed by the Executive Committee unless such additional powers and duties have been approved by the Board.
  4. The Executive Committee shall oversee negotiating all employment contracts of non-bargaining unit District employees and shall submit them to the full Board for approval.

- d. Vacancies on a committee shall be filled by the Executive Committee, except for vacancies on the Pension Committee, which shall be filled by the Board. In accordance with the provisions of the District's pension plan documents, if a vacancy occurs on the Pension Committee, the members of the committee may elect from amongst the members of the Board a member to serve on the committee until such time as the vacancy is filled by the Board.

- 2. a. The Water Operations Committee shall:
  - Be responsible for the oversight of the Cromwell Fire District Water Operations.
- b. Work with the Executive Director or Financial Advisor to review all expenditures that are not normally budgeted operating expenses.
- c. Report back to the full board, as necessary, the status of the Water Operations Division.
- d. Carry out any other duties in relation to the Water Division as requested by the board.

### 3. Public Safety Tower Committee

## **E. Special Committees shall have the following respective duties, responsibilities, and powers:**

- 1. The Budget & Oversight Committee shall:
  - a. Develop a preliminary annual budget for timely submission to the Board.
  - b. Review proposed budget transfers and special appropriations during the course of the fiscal year.
  - c. Oversee the Executive Director in the creation of operational and financial policies for the District's Water Division and Fire Department Division and refer such policies to the Board for approval.
  - d. Make recommendations to the Board as to the appointment of an independent auditor.
  - e. Act as the "Audit Committee" for the District and exercise the roles and responsibilities assigned to audit committees under generally accepted accounting practices.
  - f. Oversee the Executive Director in the review of the insurance coverage for real and personal property, employees and personnel, liability and other insurable risks of the District.
  - g. Cause to be prepared and filed with the Town Clerk of the Town of Cromwell the annual report required by Conn. Gen. Stat. §7-325(c).
  - h. In carrying out its responsibilities and duties, coordinate as appropriate any financial matters related thereto with the Treasurer and the Executive Director.
  - k. Carry out such other duties as are delegated to the committee by the President or the Board.
- 2. Pension Committee shall:
  - a. Exercise such powers and fulfill such responsibilities as are set out in the District's pension plan documents.
  - b. In carrying out its responsibilities and duties, coordinate as appropriate any financial matters related thereto with the Treasurer and the Executive Director.

**H. Reports by All Committees to the Board of Commissioners:**

1. Each standing committee shall prepare a written report to the Board following their meetings to be included in the agenda for each regular monthly meeting of the Board, as well as such other reports as shall be requested by the President or the Board.
2. Each special committee shall prepare a written, or oral report to the Board to be included in the agenda for each regular monthly meeting of the Board following each meeting of the special committee, as well as such other reports as shall be requested by the President or the Board.

**I. Procedures:**

1. Each standing and special committee of the Board shall act by a majority vote of those present and voting at a meeting of the committee at which quorum is present. The quorum for any committee shall consist of a majority of the members thereof. For purposes of determining quorum, the President of the Board shall be included, regardless of whether the President is serving as a voting or *ex officio* member of the committee. The proceedings of each committee shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

**J. Authority of Special Committees:** Each Special Committee of the Board shall not be able to conduct or cause to happen business of the Cromwell Fire District unless otherwise stated in this document, or as granted by the Board.

Article XIV

Cromwell Fire District Operational Division Heads

Cromwell Fire District

**A. Executive Director of District Operations:**

1. Shall operate as the Chief Executive Officer of the Cromwell Fire District.
2. Shall operate under the provisions of his/her Employment Contract with the specific duties spelled out in his/her job description.
3. Shall abide by all laws of the State of Connecticut.
4. Shall abide by all collective bargaining agreements that are in force within the Cromwell Fire District.
5. The Executive Director of District Operations shall be properly qualified for the duties of his/her office and may be removed for cause by action of the Board, within the limits of his/her employment contract.

**B. The Fire Department Chief:**

1. Shall operate under the provisions of his/her Employment Contract with the specific duties spelled out in his/her job description.

**F. Communications Manager:**

1. Shall operate under the provisions of, and within the specific duties spelled out in his/her job description.
2. Shall abide by all laws of the State of Connecticut and any other agencies that govern emergency communications centers.
3. Shall abide by all collective bargaining agreements that are in force within the Cromwell Fire District.
4. The Communications Manager shall be properly qualified and certified for the duties of his/her office and may be removed at any time based on work performance or violation of rules and regulations or the employee handbook by action of the Executive Director and the Board.

**Article XV**

**Suspension, Alteration or Amendment of the By-Laws and Rules of Procedure:**

- A. These By-laws and regulations may be added to, altered, repealed or amended by a majority of the voters present at any special or annual meeting of the District duly warned and held.