

# Cromwell Fire District

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FIRE DISTRICT OFFICE  
WATER DIVISION

FIRE DEPARTMENT  
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

## **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS** **Health, Safety & Facilities Committee**

**Monday, May 13, 2024, 10:30 AM**

**Coles Road Firehouse  
105 Coles Road  
Cromwell, CT**

Present: Commissioners Chip Darius (Chairman), John Sokolowski and Donald Goranson, Fire Chief Jason Brade, Assistant Fire Chief Karl Neubecker, Water Operations Manager Joseph Palmieri, Communication Manager Justin Lonergan, IAFF Local 4662, Greg Bannon, Assistant Chief Neubecker, Executive Director Roger Hart, Russ Johnson Facilities Maintenance, Chris Logan Mechanic and Commissioner Don Smith. Committee member Commissioner Robert McIntyre was absent.

- I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 10:37 AM, by Chairman Chip Darius.
- II. Approval of Agenda. The Chair asked if any changes to the agenda were necessary. Hearing none.

*A motion was made by Commissioner Goranson, seconded by Commissioner Sokolowski and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as submitted.*

- III. Public Comment. There were no public comments to report.
- IV. Review Committee Duties. The function of the Health, Safety and Facilities Committee is to support the Department Heads, Officers and administrative staff in their health & safety efforts.
- V. Old Business
  - A. **West Street firehouse front apron** – Project is pending the approval of the Proposed 2024-2025 FY Budget.
  - B. **Court St. birds** – The Chief received several quotes to deal with the situation. The Chief has requested \$7,000 in the 2024-2025 budget cycle to address the issue.
  - C. **Coles Road Sidewalk Spalling** – There are no updates.
  - D. **Testing Engine 2 for AFFF** – In progress.
  - E. **Air Quality in Stations** – In progress. Chairman suggested to contact ConnOSHA to test air quality to determine if all the air filters are still needed.
  - F. **Mattresses in Sleeping Quarters** – In progress. New bed frames have been purchased and the project is moving forward.
  - G. **Court St. Apparatus Floor** – Pending 2024-2025 FY budget approval.

- H. **EVO Resources and Qualifications** – Ass't Chief Neubecker reported that all the Fire Department's apparatus operators are up to speed with qualifications and licensing requirements.
- I. **Available Health & Safety Resources; In-house and Online** – Ass't Chief Neubecker and Chief Brade reported project is in progress and they are updating the recordkeeping to Red Alert.
- J. **OSHA 300** – New incident -- two injured Fire Fighters, related to yesterday's structure fire. Both treated and released. Both fire fighters received proximity burns from radiant heat through their turn out gear. Analysis underway.
- K. **Second Gear Extractor** – In progress.
- L. **Back up Turnout Gear** – Pending the approval of the 2024-2025 FY budget. (A discussion ensued regarding potential damage to turn out gear from yesterday's fire and decontamination procedures. Also, a discussion on clean cab initiatives.)
- M. **PEER Support** – Assistant Chief Neubecker reported six (6) people are on the Team and three (3) are scheduled for training. Chairman suggested CTEMS Advisory Committee Health & Wellness subcommittee as a potential resource.
- N. **Safety Data Sheets** – Chairman reminded department heads to stay diligent with Safety Data Sheets and ensure collections are complete.
- O. **Back up Alarms and Cameras** – Pending approval of 2024-2025 FY budget.
- P. **Red Light Pre-emption** – Pending approval of 2024-2025 FY budget.
- Q. **PPE and Head Protection** - Assistant Chief Neubecker reported all firefighter hoods are properly rated against particulate matter. A brief discussion occurred regarding trends of head gear, with some departments moving towards using OSHA recommended helmets with chin straps at crash scenes, rather than fire helmets.
- R. **Touchless Handwashing** – No Updates.
- S. **Table & Chairs** – New dining table at Court Street was donated. A well-constructed addition to the facility. Department heads are asked to do a table and chair survey and submit results to the Executive Director.
- T. **Court Street Railings** – Pending approval of 2024-2025 FY budget.
- U. **Implications Regarding R1 Changes** – No new information. Chief Brade reported they are tracking the call activities. Noted, multiple calls at the same time yesterday during and after the structure fire.
- V. **Safety Theme of the Month** – Assistant Chief Neubecker to determine going forward.
- W. **Facility Security** – No Update. Brief discussion on securing Coles Road bays from the rest of the fire house.
- X. **OSHA 29 CFR 1910.156 Update** – Chairman advised public comment term has been extended until June 21, 2024. Brief discussion on CONN-OSHA acceptance of standards changes.
- Y. **Look Ahead** - TPC, FD working well with PD. Established Unified Command at TPC this year. October – Fire Safety month.
- Z. **Firefighter Physical Fitness Program** – Chief Brade working to implement program. Working with members and Union. Pending approval of 2024-2025 FY budget.

VI. New Business

- A. **Reports, department heads and key staff** – Water, no new business to report. Chairman reminded committee of summer weather approaching, and outdoor staff protocols for heat stress. Communications, nothing new to report, will be adding heat stress info to daily updates per calendar. Fire/EMS, Chief Brade discussed heat stress related protocols, poison ivy and fire wipes. Chief Brade discussed three (3) issues at Court Street: ants, stink bugs, and a report of air quality issues. Insect issues have been addressed, and he is

waiting on a Purchase Order to move on air quality testing. Maintenance, no report. Mechanic, no report. Executive Director, no report.

- B. **Policies, SOP's/SOG's, Compliance Plans** – Commissioner Sokolowski questioned the process for updating the current Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs). He further stated new employees are more susceptible to bad practices without strong, current SOGs. Fire ground injuries and deaths are frequently related to the lack of SOGs. Chief Brade said it is an ongoing process of updating and purging old policies. He is switching to Red Alert to promulgate policies and procedures. The Union is working with the Chief and understands it is a long process.
  - C. **Discussion of Tick-borne Illness** – Chairman Darius mentioned multiple tick born illnesses for staff awareness, including Powassan Virus. Many people infected with Powassan virus do not have symptoms. For people with symptoms, the time from tick bite to feeling sick ranges from 1 week to 1 month. Initial symptoms can include fever, headache, vomiting, and weakness. Russ Johnson reported the District does not presently treat lawn and grounds for ticks. Joe Palmeri reported the Water District can not treat for ticks near the wellfield, and protocol is for water staff to check for ticks at end of day.
  - D. **Limited Access Highway Reimbursement Program** – Commissioner Goranson heard the Fire Academy is giving credit to agencies in leu of payments for the program. Chief Brade was unaware of this, but he knew the program had been suspended due to the appropriated funds being exhausted. Chief Brade will explore further.
- VII. Comments from Department Heads, Union Reps, Commissioners. No further reports or comments.
- VIII. Adjournment. There being no further business:

*A motion was made by Commissioner Sokolowski, seconded by Commissioner Goranson, and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 11:25 AM.*

Respectfully submitted,

Chip Darius, Chairman