

Cromwell Fire District

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FIRE DISTRICT OFFICE
WATER DIVISION

FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS Fire Department Operations Committee

Tuesday, August 15, 2017

5:30 PM

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

Present: Commissioners John Hamlin (Chairman), David Colligan and Charles Epstein. Also attending were Fire Chief Michael Terenzio and Assistant Fire Chief EMS Robert McIntyre. Also attending the meeting were Commissioners Robert Donohue, Roger Rukowicz, Jason Hinners and Craig Murphy (Board President).

- I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM, by Chairman Hamlin.
- II. Approval of Agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as submitted with the following addition under New Business; a discussion with the Fire Chief regarding issues he is working on.
- III. Approval of Minutes of July 18, 2017. A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the minutes of the Fire Department Operations Committee Meeting of July 18, 2017, as submitted.
- IV. Public Comment. There were no public comments to report.
- V. Communications Report. Commissioner Colligan reported that all the vehicles have been serviced. They are now working on the portables. The Fire Chief and Firefighter McKnight have started a program with Norcom to service all of them on a regular basis. All bay stations have been done, as well as all service antennas. The Tower will be the next thing to be serviced. By the end of the month or middle of September, it is anticipated that all equipment will be serviced. After that a date will be set for reprogramming with new frequencies. A meeting will be held with Norcom this week to discuss reprogramming. They will also be getting more information on the voting system throughout the Town, but that will not stop the District from reprogramming. Once the voting system is in place, it will enhance the operation and make fire operations safer. Commissioner Colligan stated that we need to go to digital, and the P-25 system. It will increase capabilities inside structures, and it will be a safer operation. Any areas where the voting system is installed, the P-25 will be at the same site. It will be the same antenna at each of those sites. Chief Terenzio reported that they are waiting for the first radios to be returned that are being PM'd (program maintaining). He reported that for years it was assumed that the command vehicles had repeaters, and they had been used on the fire grounds. It was learned there were no repeaters in any of the command vehicles, just a switch. They looked every place possible in the vehicles, and could not find any repeaters. It is not known if any were purchased. Even if they were, they

would have been the wrong ones anyway. The correct ones will eventually be purchased but not until the P-25 system is in place. Commissioner Colligan is not sure if repeaters will be needed once the P-25 system is in place.

There is a lot of engineering work to be done. Norcom will be submitting their engineering plans, recommendations and reports after the project has been completed. Also an Operations and Repair Manual will be published that will allow anyone to be able to research how to perform maintenance work or repair work to the system with the aid of this reference document. Copies of the manuals will be distributed to Dispatch, The Fire District office and the Fire Chief's Office. Commissioner Colligan explained that the District owns the Chemfeed Building which is the highest point near the river. An antenna would go there with a box. Commissioner Colligan added that the District is the only entity in the Town of Cromwell that has fiber optics with thanks going to Angel Alvarado for that. We will be able to use the fiber optic technology for the voting system there as well as the other voting system. We will also be able to use Town Hall with the fiber optic system. There will be antenna coverage in a triangular shape covering the Town. Norcom has voting systems that they lease at a very low cost until the District can get the P-25.

Commissioner Colligan reported that the only cost the District has incurred so far has been for servicing equipment. He believes it has been less than \$9,000. They are trying to use grant money to cover some of the P-25 cost. The paging system will need to continue to be dispatched the way it is currently through VHF. The grant will not pay for pagers. Chief Terenzio added that they have found a bunch of pagers, and they are working to make them operational. A lot of new members have not been issued pagers. Even if a pager is on a low band, it doesn't mean a tone can't be transferred to get someone to the Firehouse. Firefighter McKnight has been assigned the task of getting the pagers operational. Commissioner Colligan reported that Firefighter McKnight has stepped up to the plate and is working hard. He added that Firefighter McKnight did an excellent job with the inventory. Chief Terenzio reported he has been in contact with the Grants Assistance Division of Motorola. Everything should be ready for when the Notice of Funding Opportunity is published with the Federal Government. Assistant Chief EMS McIntyre reported for the EMS Division that there are no duplicate radios. There is one low band and one high band. Commissioner Colligan responded they should be on a multiband which is called a combination that includes VHF and UHF. Ass't Chief EMS McIntyre added there are trunking radios. From ambulance to ambulance the trunking is not the same. Commissioner Colligan asked that the EMS officers email Commissioner Colligan, Chief Terenzio or Mr. Dagostino their communication concerns so that they may be addressed. That is the best method of communication on these issues.

- VI. Reports of Chief Officers. Chief Terenzio gave an update on operations. He reported that about one month ago President Murphy requested an assessment and evaluation be done on the non-career compensation format and the status of it. The Chief has almost completed the report. He will review with his staff before it is submitted. The Strategic Plan is moving along. He is still waiting for an evaluation from the Officers on what equipment they would like to remove from the Rescue to put on a temporary piece in the event that the Rescue has a maintenance issue that would put it out of service. He did not recommend spending any serious amount of money on it at this point. There is a plan in case the Rescue needs to be put out of service. Chief Terenzio reported he has put PO's out for ladder testing. It is not going to be business as usual. He received 3 quotes. Some of them are half of what has been spent in the past. He is trying to work within the budget constraints that have been dictated. They are also getting ready for hose testing and all other annual testing that is due. He added that one thing that has been done in the past is servicing Hearst tools. It is only a recommendation, not a requirement to do them annually. He will not approve having them serviced this year because it is not necessary. It was noted that these tools can have fluids changed, etc. by either the Fire Department mechanic or career staff. Personnel do not need to be certified in order to touch a Hearst tool. It was agreed that routine maintenance should

be handled through the mechanic for the District to keep some type of order in documenting when and what type of maintenance is performed.

Chief Terenzio added that he is coming close to his first year anniversary with Cromwell. He has had a chance to become familiar with the District and its operations. Within the next few weeks he will be making some recommendations and changes through the Fire Operations Committee. He felt he was hired for this purpose, and knows that is a Chief's responsibility. He continues to develop policies and SOP's for the Fire Marshal's office which were never in existence and should be. It is no different than any other Public Safety forum. The Chief briefly discussed the 4th of July issues regarding response capability. He intends to not let that happen again for seasonal events. The Chief has shared with the Executive Director a 2 page letter he sent to the Planning and Zoning Officer for the property on the corner of Court Street and Shunpike Road. A 4 story light weight wood apartment building is being proposed. He cannot approve or disapprove the project but he has informed Planning & Zoning that the construction will severely impact the firefighting ability of the Fire Department. The type of structure being proposed can burn down very quickly. The Fire Marshal has stated that the code may preclude a sprinkler requirement. The Fire Chief is going to make the recommendation for a sprinkler system. The housing being proposed for that building is Section 8. Chief Terenzio responded to the Planning and Zoning application as Fire Chief of Cromwell. He did not claim to be "for" or "against" the project, but did indicate it will be a huge impact on his Department. He listed the reasons why and included case studies. He will recommend as many fire protections as possible. He will also require the Fire Marshal to be at the construction site every day.

Commissioner Colligan had a question about AED's. Some were purchased in 2016. Ass't Chief EMS McIntyre responded that he spoke to former Ass't Chief EMS Clare who stated that they needed to be reprogrammed, but for some reason couldn't be. The Ass't Chief EMS McIntyre will be looking further into it. He thinks they can be refurbished. Their life cycle should be good for another year according to the Visio representatives. They recommend after nine years that they be upgraded. They could then take them back as a trade-in. The EMS Division will be working to get them into service.

- VII. Firefighter/EMT Staffing and Hiring. The Chief reported that they lost a career firefighter and may lose another one. That position has been posted with A.R. Mazzotta. It has also been advertised on the CT server for the Academy, Fire Recruits, Indeed, Glass Door and other job boards on line. They have received 15 resumes thus far. A written test will be given to determine 50% of the exam grade with the other 50% being oral. The top 5 candidates will be determined based on their scoring. An internal interview will be conducted to determine the finalists. Five additional points will be given to any Cromwell resident or member in good standing with the Department.
- VIII. Fire Department Response Capability. Chief Terenzio stated that response capability is always under constant review with the Chief's office. There are always concerns about it. The Chief will have a report for the next meeting.
- IX. Old Business. There was no old business to report.
- X. New Business. Commissioner Colligan stated that the Chief has already touched on some of the topics he wanted to discuss. He stated that the Chief has been with the Department for almost a year now. Commissioner Colligan would like to see his evaluation of the Department recognizing the positive and negative aspects of the Department. He wants to find out what needs to be done to bring the Fire Department back to the operating status it once was. He specifically asked what direction the Chief thinks we need to go, what things the Chief has found that need to be corrected. The reason he mentioned this at this time is because the outcome of the Chief's evaluation may impact budget requests. Soon it will be time to start thinking about items for the budget. The Chief stated that he is planning to make

that assessment. The results of which will be published in two reports. One report will be next month, and the other will be the following month. Once the reports are received, Commissioner Colligan suggested the Board of Commissioners have a workshop to discuss the contents of the reports.

XI. Commissioners' Comments. There were no further comments to report.

XII. 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 6:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Johnathon Hamlin, Chairman

Nancy Deegan
Recording Secretary
8-21-17