

Cromwell Fire District

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FIRE DISTRICT OFFICE
WATER DIVISION

FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Fire and Water Divisions

Tuesday, July 19, 2016

7:00 PM

Coles Road Firehouse

105 Coles Road

Cromwell, CT

The Commissioners of the Cromwell Fire District held their monthly Board of Commissioners' Meeting on Tuesday, July 19, 2016, at 7:00 PM, at the Coles Road Firehouse, 105 Coles Road, Cromwell, CT to discuss and act upon Fire and Water Division business.

Commissioners Frank Seidl (President), Craig Murphy, Julius Neto, David Colligan, James Bellamo, Charles Epstein, Johnathon Hamlin, and Mark Langton attended. Commissioner Donald Swanson had an excused absence. Also attending were: Operations Director S. William Jarzavek, Bob Davis and Michael Alibrio from Premier Accounting, Communications Manager Rick Andersen, Acting Fire Chief Michael Salonia, and Fire Marshal Todd Gagnon.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Seidl. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Seidl. A moment of silence was observed in honor of the police officers slain in Dallas and Baton Rouge.

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, Item D. Proposed Amendment to the Cromwell Fire District By-Laws.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF

JUNE 21, 2016

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Hamlin and unanimously approved to accept the Board of Commissioners' Meeting minutes of June 21, 2016, as submitted.

READING OF COMMUNICATIONS & WRITTEN APPEALS TO THE BOARD

There were no communications or appeals to report.

REPORTS OF THE STAFF

- A. Executive Director. The Executive Director's Report for June had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Dagostino recognized the Fire Marshal's Office for their improvements in planning for the Travelers Championship. They have come up with a more organized, better approach for planning and implementing the many responsibilities they have up to and including tournament week.

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Hamlin and unanimously approved to accept the Executive Director's Report for June 2016 as submitted.

- B. Financial Report/Treasurer's Report. The Financial Report/Treasurer's Report for June had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office.

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the Financial Report/Treasurer's Report for June 2016 as submitted. Bob Davis was asked about the financial situation. He said that although the fiscal year is over it will take 30-60 days to close the books. He referred the Commissioners to the report which indicates a projected surplus in the General Fund. He also noted that receivables for June are understated because of the very large amount of water pumped. Mr. Davis also noted that the finances of the District are in the best shape he has seen and credited the Executive Director and Managers for their roles in budgeting and financial planning.

Commissioner Neto asked Mr. Dagostino about the percentage of uncollected water bills. He did not have a figure but will get back to the Commissioners. He was also asked about the procedures for collecting delinquent water bills. Mr. Dagositno reported that these were previously handled by Attorney Petrella but are now being handled in-house and by Attorney Kevin Dineen. Letters and bills indicating late fees will be sent out.

- C. Fire Department Chief. The Chief's Report for June had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Acting Chief Salonia was asked about having sufficient personnel to respond to calls. Chief Salonia answered that in general response is very good and much improved. The weekend accident on Shunpike Road was discussed. The Chief also noted that the Department is getting ready for the Travelers Championship.

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to accept the Fire Chief's Report for June 2016 as submitted.

- D. Fire Marshal. The Fire Marshal's Report for June had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. There was a question about the 96.4% of inspections completed. Mr. Gagnon noted that this figure was for the calendar year 2016, not the fiscal year. It was also reported that after the offices closed for the day today (Tuesday) there was a fender-bender accident in the West Street parking lot involving the Fire Marshal's vehicle. Someone patronizing a nearby business backed into the vehicle. A police report was filed. The driver is insured.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hamlin, seconded by Commissioner Neto and unanimously approved to accept the Fire Marshal's Report for June 2016 as submitted.

- E. Water Operations. The Operations Report for June had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Jarzavek was asked about the generator project. He replied that the slab has been poured. The generator is supposed to be ready to be shipped from the factory by the end of July, but delivery and set up needs to be coordinated so it does not take place during the Tournament. Mr. Jarzavek also updated the Board on the Raymond Place project. There will be a pre bid meeting next week with a bid opening August 3rd. with the project hopefully starting in September. With the hot, dry weather the issue of equipment failure was raised. Mr. Jarzavek noted that we now have Well 4, and additionally, in the event of a motor failing he is confident it can be quickly fixed. A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to accept the Operations Report for June 2016 as submitted.
- F. Communications Report. The Communications Report for June had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. The two new employees in dispatch are doing well. Dispatch staffing was discussed. The Alcap Ridge tower site was also discussed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hamlin, seconded by Commissioner Hamlin and unanimously approved to accept the Communications Report for June 2016 as submitted.

REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. District Operations. There was no meeting, no report.
- B. Executive Committee. There was no meeting, no report.
- C. Fire Operations Committee. There was not meeting, no report.
- D. Pension Committee. A meeting was held Tuesday, June 21st. Minutes were available, but they were unsigned. A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Hamlin and approved unanimously to table the approval of the Pension Committee minutes until the August meeting.
- E. Personnel Committee Meeting. A meeting was held on June 21, 2016. Minutes had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the Personnel Committee Meeting minutes of June 21, 2016, as submitted.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

There were no appointments to report.

CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

- A. Report of the Town Council Liaison. Town Council Liaison Samantha Slade apologized for her absence last month due to military training and updated the Commissioners with the following developments at Town Hall: Work has begun on the new expanded parking lot. Elevator renovations have begun. On July 28th the Council will continue their business

visitations by visiting a couple of farms in Cromwell. An Ad Hoc Committee has been established to review River Road property. The Splash Pad had its grand opening last month and continues to be very popular. The Mayor's Ball will be held October 1st at the TPC. Next month's Council meeting will be on the 24th instead of the 10th to allow for reviews to be completed.

B. Reports of the Special Committees

1. Public Safety Tower Committee. A meeting was held June 3rd. Minutes had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the District Office. A motion was made by Commissioner Hamlin, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and passed unanimously to approval the minutes of the June 3rd Public Safety Tower Committee.
2. Building Committee. A meeting was held just prior to the Board Meeting.
3. Safety Committee. No meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Commissioners' Comments. Commissioner Epstein, on behalf of the CT Special Olympics, thanked the Fire Department for use of a golf cart during the games held at Southern CT State University. Commissioner Epstein also noted that the firefighters and dispatchers are doing a good job.

Commissioner Neto noted that at a Town Council meeting the possibility of joining a bonding issue with the Town and the District was raised. He suggested if there is an opportunity for savings, it should be explored. Mr. Dagostino noted that there would be many challenges. Mr. Jarzavek noted that although the District and Town are engaged in joint bidding work, Raymond Place is a separate project. Commissioner Epstein said that if we can save money, this needs to be explored. Commissioner Hamlin noted that this is analogous to bonding with the City of Middletown because the District and the Town are two separate entities. He wonders if there are other motives because he has heard the some people in Town want to "take over" the District because they note that the District is profitable and well run. Commissioner Neto reiterated his interest in saving taxpayer money if possible. Commissioner Seidl agreed that all savings need to be pursued, but noted that Mr. Dagostino is looking into this matter and will do his due diligence, and we need to carefully consider the pros and cons of the issue.

- B. Budgetary Adjustments. None.

- C. Approval of Contracts/Contractors None.

- D. Proposed Amendment to the Cromwell Fire District By-Laws

Copies were made and distributed to the Commissioners, and Commissioner Neto read aloud the proposed amendment, copy of which is attached to the minutes on file at the District Office. The amendment concerns article IV, section B (2), the election of Commissioners. To summarize: Candidates for the Board of Commissioners must notify the District in advance of their intent to run. Commissioner Neto addressed the background of this issue by saying that for a couple of years some Commissioners have felt the electorate should have more of an opportunity to make a decision and to allow for more transparency. Another advantage would be the District would be able to pre-print ballots, making for a smoother counting process. Commissioner Seidl stated the process: if the Commissioners decided to move forward with this, the first step would be to discuss this item, then table it for a Special Meeting prior to the August Board meeting. This meeting will be duly warned and the public has the right to comment and ask questions.

Commissioner Neto made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Epstein to discuss this proposed amendment. Commissioner Bellamo asked Commissioner Neto if he had put together the proposed changed. Commissioner Neto replied that Mr. Dagostino had put this together at Commissioner Neto's request. Commissioner Bellamo wanted to know why this has come about. Commissioner Neto said it come about through various discussions with other Commissioners including Commissioner Swanson and the electorate. Commissioner Hamlin stated that he has received very positive feedback since the election was moved from the Coles Road firehouse to the Town Hall. Parking has been easier, rooms are less crowded and there is a higher turnout. Commissioner Murphy noted that this has been talked about for years and it might be time to act. Discussion concluded, Commissioner Hamlin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Epstein that this item moves forward to a Special Meeting held prior to the August Board of Commissioners meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nicole LaTerra of 13 Hicksville Road asked how people would know about the Special Meeting. She was told a legal notice would be published and put on the District's website. Commissioner Neto noted that if this changed is approved by the voters a press release should be issued to get the word out to voters and prospective candidates that they cannot show up on election night to be nominated. Kevin Janicke of 167 Old West Street wanted to know if absentee ballots would be available. He also had a question about a letter he received from the officers of the Fire Department. The Commissioners instructed him to address his questions to the officers of the Fire Department.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Hamlin, seconded by Commissioner Neto and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 PM.

ATTEST:

Janet Schmaltz
Recording Secretary
7-26-16

Julius Neto, Secretary