

Cromwell Fire District

1 West Street
Cromwell, CT 06416
Telephone 860-635-4420

FIRE DISTRICT OFFICE
WATER DIVISION

FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Fire and Water Divisions
Tuesday, February 21, 2017
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, February 21, 2017, 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), Julius Neto, Craig Murphy, Johnathon Hamlin, Lee Brow, Charles Epstein, Roger Rukowicz, David Colligan and Jason Hinnners attended. Also attending were Executive Director Michael Dagostino, Operations Director S. William Jarzavek, Fire Marshal Todd Gagnon, Fire Chief Michael Terenzio, Assistant Fire Chief D.J. Zordan, Communications Manager Rick Andersen and Michael Alibrio from Premier Accounting.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM, by President Seidl. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Seidl.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Brow and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as submitted with the following addition: after the second Public Comment item on the agenda (Item XI), Item XII will be Executive Session instead of Adjournment and an Item XIII will be added for Adjournment. It was noted that Executive Session will be to discuss certain personnel issues.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Brow and unanimously approved to accept the amended agenda as noted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nicole LaTerra, Hicksville Road, noted that she spoke with one of the Commission members regarding the District not being able to put all reports submitted for a Board meeting on line prior to being approved at a Commission meeting. She asked if there was another way to make the information available to the public prior to a meeting or can there be a brief summary of a report as it comes up on the agenda at the meeting. Commissioner Epstein requested through the President that individuals give a brief oral summary of their monthly reports or agenda items before it is voted on for approval. It was also noted that members from the public have two opportunities to ask questions on any of the agenda items during the two public comment items on the meeting agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF
JANUARY 17, 2017

A motion was made by Commissioner Brow, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the Board of Commissioners' Meeting minutes of January 17, 2017, as submitted.

APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL DISTRICT MEETING MINUTES OF
JANUARY 17, 2017

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Brow and unanimously approved to accept the minutes from the Special District Meeting of January 17, 2017, as submitted.

APPROVAL OF SPECIAL BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF
FEBRUARY 7, 2017

The minutes were distributed to the Commissioners at this meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Brow, seconded by Commissioner Hamlin and unanimously approved to table the minutes until next month's meeting so that Commissioners would have more time to review them.

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 January had been previously submitted and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Dagostino gave a brief oral summary of his report. He reported that the District has had some conversations and negotiations with the new Dispatchers Union which is AFSCME Local 1303. Negotiations are still ongoing, therefore, Mr. Dagostino was not able to go into any detail on those conversations. Also, Local 4662 (Career Firefighters Union) had some negotiations regarding adding the Fire Marshal into their Union. It was decided by the Department of Labor, and a tentative agreement has been reached with Local 4662. The District is waiting for final copies of the contract so that they can be executed. He further reported that the budget process has begun. Most of the Department heads have submitted their initial budget requests. Mr. Dagostino will be reviewing those requests and plans on forwarding them to the Executive Committee sometime in March. An analysis and report was done on the radios and communication system by NORCOM. This was at no cost to the District. It was discussed in detail at the Special Board meeting on February 7. There is more to come on that. The Fire Chief may have more information available later on during this meeting under his report. They will be trying to expedite all the corrective actions recommended in the report. He discussed the Capital project for the roof replacement on the Coles Road Firehouse for \$50,000. However, because of the issues reported with the radios and communication system, it was discussed and Mr. Dagostino recommended that the roof project be suspended as there is no immediate threat. All individuals that responded to the bid request for the roof have been notified. There will need to be a Special meeting or Town meeting to re-allocate the funds for corrective actions on the radios and communication system. Mr. Dagostino added that he has been approached by the owner of 14 Alcap Ridge to re-engage on the negotiations of helping the District with radio coverage at that end of Town.

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Neto and unanimously approved to accept the Executive Director's Report for January as presented.

- B. Financial Report. The Financial Report had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Alebrio added that they have updated the 15/16 column on the reports with the actual final audited numbers. Both General Fund and Water fund have revenues exceeding expenditures by \$86,000 in the General Fund and \$500,000 in Water. Both tax collections and water billing are pretty much on target to what they were budgeted for. Commissioner Colligan asked about debt collection with the ambulance bills. It was noted that

Holdsworth is in transition because the company has been sold to Quick Med Claims. Mr. Dagostino will be meeting with Bob Holdsworth either the end of the week or next week as Mr. Holdsworth will be staying on in the company temporarily. It is believed that there will be a quicker turnaround time with the billing.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Brow and unanimously approved to accept the Financial Report for January as submitted.

- C. Fire Department Chief. The Chief's Report for January had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District office. Chief Terenzio gave an update from his written report. He reported that 4B is in service. The Chief added that NORCOM has gotten back to the Chief, and they are working on the receive channel on the frequency for the repeater. Some options are being looked at. Commissioner Hamlin asked about the reimbursement from Mattabassett for turnout gear. The District has not received a response, but they were scheduled to have a meeting tonight and it is hoped that something may come out of that meeting. If not, the District will be in contact with Mattabassett.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brow, seconded by Commissioner Hamlin and unanimously approved to accept the Fire Chief's Report for January as submitted.

- D. Fire Marshal. The Fire Marshal's Report for January had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Gagnon added that inspections are going well. They are keeping up with the schedule. He added they are working on their new software. He had put in a request to attend a training class in April to learn the new software. The software is an upgrade from the old software. Also discussed was the National Fire Incident Reports (NFIRS) that are included in the Fire Marshal's monthly report. A typographical error was made indicated that there are 180 reports unfinished from the beginning of 2017. The year noted should be 2016. The Fire Chief added that most of those unfinished reports are from EMS. He is currently working with EMS to address getting the reports completed and stressing the importance of completed reports. Commissioner Rukowicz asked about the status of researching new fees for the Fire Marshal's Office. Mr. Gagnon responded that he has been waiting for the attorneys to advise whether or not the District can administer fees. Since the District is a separate entity of the Town, fees are administered by ordinance, and the Fire District does not have any ordinances that govern a fee structure. The Fire Marshal will follow up on that.

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

- E. Water Operations. The Operations Report for January had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Jarzavek gave an update on the water main project (Raymond Place) with DeRita Construction. He believes that the District's portion of the project should be completed by the beginning of March. They had been working on the middle school area while the school was closed for vacation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Hamlin and unanimously approved to accept the Water Operations Report for January as submitted.

- F. Communications Report. The Communications Report for January had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Andersen added that he is working on integrating SOP's with the Fire Chief combining SOP's so that Fire personnel and Dispatch have a mutual understanding of procedures in both areas. Mr. Andersen also noted that he has a full time employee who will be out on a medical leave due to surgery. He also has a vacant part-time position. He is advertising for a part-time Dispatcher in the Middletown Press to help with coverage issues.

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Brow and unanimously approved to accept the Communications Report for January as submitted.

REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. District Operations Committee. There was no report. However, the President noted that there is a new Committee being formed, the Water Division Operations Committee, and the District Operations Committee will be meeting within the next month to appoint members to that Committee.
- B. Executive Committee. There has not been a meeting. Chairman Neto will be looking to schedule a meeting within the next couple of weeks as soon as budgets have been completed.
- C. Fire Operations Committee. A meeting was held on January 17, 2017. Minutes had been previously distributed and reviewed. Chairman Hamlin reported that the meeting had discussions about vehicles and radios. There was also a discussion with the Chair of the Communications Subcommittee with an update on the radio issues. The Fire Chief will be following up on many issues discussed on communications. Commissioner Murphy asked about the ice rescue that was documented in the Chief's Report for last month because Commissioner Murphy was not at last month's meeting. The Chief discussed the follow up measures implemented since the incident. He noted that an "Ice" SOP has been drafted and is ready to be published. He added that OSHA was satisfied with the report that was given by the Chief regarding the ice rescue. The annual training was performed last week by the Career Firefighters. There were no violations from OSHA to be concerned about.

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Brow and unanimously approved to accept the Fire Operations Committee Meeting minutes of January 17, 2017, as submitted.

- D. Pension Committee. Commissioner Brow had no report, and plans to schedule a meeting next month.
- E. Personnel Committee. Commissioner Murphy had no report and noted that the Committee has met a couple of times in Executive Session. No actions have been taken.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

There were no appointments to report.

CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

- A. Report of the Town Council Liaison. Samantha Slade reported that budget hearings for Town Council will begin on February 27, 2017. That hearing will be followed by a meeting on March 1. Council has already been receiving budget summaries from the various Departments. Town council has approved the revised wood-burning furnace ordinance. Residents may still have them as long as they are in compliance with DEEP's regulations and are away from their neighbors' properties by the required number of feet. The Council also approved the building construction ordinances. It was revised to include the possibility of a refund. An architectural study will be starting on the library expansion project. The Town received a grant from the State. The State will provide \$2 million and the Town will provide \$1 million. An RFP/RFQ is advertised for that project. The new light replacement project is complete. A final check is being done to make sure all lights that needed replacement have been replaced. She also discussed the proposed State budget. If the State budget is approved as proposed, it would have a considerable impact on Cromwell. ECS funding as well as other funding to Cromwell will be cut. The Governor is also asking that municipalities pay one-third of teacher's pensions. This would impact the Town significantly. The Finance Director is keeping track of what is happening at the Capitol.
- B. Reports of the Special Committees
 - 1. Public Safety Tower Committee. There has been no meeting, but a meeting is scheduled in March.
 - 2. Safety/Building Committee. Commissioner Colligan had no report.

3. Bylaws Committee. Commissioner Epstein reported that a meeting was scheduled on February 15, 2017, however, there was no quorum. A workshop was held instead. The Bylaws were reviewed. There were questions which will be discussed with the Commissioners in Executive Session at the end of this meeting. Another Committee meeting will be scheduled after that.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Commissioners' Comments. Commissioner Colligan commended all the staff involved with the two incidents that happened on the highways. There were multiple cars, and everything was handled. It was on the town line of Cromwell and Westfield. Westfield handled it as it was in their area, but Cromwell was there as first responders.
- B. Budgetary Adjustments. There were no adjustments to report.
- C. Approval of Contracts/Contractors. There were no contracts or contractors for approval.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nicole LaTerra thanked the Board for trying to rectify the reporting issue for the Board meetings. Regarding the NFIRS reports, she stated there were some concerns as to why the reporting procedure changed from being the responsibility of the Dispatch Center to the EMS division. It was explained that the procedure was not being followed correctly. The EMS personnel on the call being reported are the ones that should be completing the reports. It never should have been the responsibility of Dispatch. The Fire Chief explained the correct reporting process for NFIRS.

Ms. LaTerra asked about the proper procedure and responsibility for clearing snow from fire hydrants. It was noted that the Town has an ordinance which makes it the private property owner's responsibility to keep the hydrants clear of snow. However, Fire Department personnel have been going around Town making sure hydrants are clear of snow. It was suggested to recognize private citizens that always clear their hydrants on a routine basis when it snows. The Fire Chief will do some type of press release to recognize those private citizens. The Chief will also speak to the Police Chief about including fire hydrant clearing when she contacts the public about sidewalk clearing. It was agreed to keep the public educated on these issues. Ms. LaTerra suggested composing a list of elderly, sick, or handicapped residents who are unable to clear their hydrants. The list would be a point of reference of hydrants to check first. Giving those residents direct contact information would also be helpful.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Commissioner Brow, seconded by Commissioner Hinnens and unanimously approved to enter into Executive Session at 7:55 PM to discuss personnel issues. The Executive Director was invited to the Session, and the Fire Chief was invited to the first part of the session.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brow, seconded by Commissioner Murphy and unanimously approved to adjourn Executive Session at 9:25 PM, with no action taken.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Brow, seconded by Commissioner Neto and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 9:29 PM.

ATTEST:

Nancy Deegan
Recording Secretary, 2-28-17

Johnathon Hamlin, Secretary