

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, September 20, 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, September 20, 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, Donald Swanson and Johnathon Hamlin attended. Also attending were Executive Director Michael Dagostino, Operations Director S. William Jarzavek, Fire Chief Michael Terenzio, Deputy Fire Chief Michael Salonia, Assistant Fire Chief Douglas Zordan, Fire Marshal Todd Gagnon, Town Liaison Samantha Slade, Communications Director Rick Andersen and Premier Accounting staff Bob Davis and Michael Alibrio.

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 Hamlin, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as submitted with the following additions: moving the Fire Chief's Report before Item III. Public Comment; and to add an Item XIII. Adjournment and making Item XII. Executive Session.

C. Fire Chief's Report. This report was moved on the agenda to be discussed at this time. The Fire Chief's Report for August had been previously submitted and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. The Chief thanked everyone for attending his swearing in ceremony before this meeting. He looks forward to working with everyone, and is optimistic about the future. He thanked Deputy Chief Salonia for turning over to him a well-run situation.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments to report.

APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES
OF AUGUST 16, 2016

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Swanson and unanimously approved to accept the Board of Commissioners' Meeting minutes of August 16, 2016, as submitted.

APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES
OF AUGUST 16, 2016

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the minutes of the Special Board of Commissioners' Meeting of August 16, 2016, as submitted. Commissioner Murphy asked for an update on the pending By-Law issue. Mr. Dagostino reported that he was to receive an opinion letter from Attorney Kevin Deneen today. It was not received today, so Mr. Dagostino has forwarded a follow-up request.

APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL FIRE DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
OF AUGUST 15, 2016

A motion was made by Commissioner Hamlin, seconded by Commissioner Neto and unanimously approved to accept the minutes of the Special Fire District Commission Meeting of August 15, 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 August had been previously submitted and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Dagostino reported that the staff is preparing for the upcoming election.

A motion was made by Commissioner Swanson, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to accept the Executive Director's Report for August as submitted.

- B. Financial Report/Treasurer's Report. The Financial Report/Treasurer's Report for August had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Alibrio added that the audit will be starting on Tuesday, October 4.

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Murphy and unanimously approved to accept the Financial Report/Treasurer's Report for August as submitted.

- C. Fire Department Chief. See above under Approval of Agenda.

- D. Fire Marshal. The Fire Marshal's Report for August had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Fire Marshal Gagnon added that his office is on target with their inspection schedule.

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

- E. Water Operations. The Operations Report for August had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Jarzavek

added that DeRita Construction delivered some pipe and plan on laying the replacement main for Sunset Drive next week.

A motion was made by Commissioner Swanson, seconded by Commissioner Neto and unanimously approved to accept the Operations Report for August as submitted.

- F. Communications Report. The Communications Report for August had been distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office.

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

REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. District Operations. There was no report.
- B. Executive Committee. There was no report.
- C. Fire Operations Committee. There was no meeting on September 7, 2016, due to the lack of a quorum.
- D. Pension Committee. There was no meeting.
- E. Personnel Committee

1. Special Meeting of August 10, 2016. A Special Personnel Committee meeting was held on August 10, 2016. Minutes had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Commissioner Murphy explained that the meeting was primarily in Executive Session where the findings of the Fire Chief Search Committee were discussed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Swanson, seconded by Commissioner Neto and unanimously approved to accept the Special Personnel Committee meeting minutes of August 10, 2016, as submitted.

2. Special Meeting of August 15, 2016. A Special Personnel Committee meeting was held on August 15, 2016. Minutes had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Commissioner Murphy explained that the meeting was primarily in Executive Session where the Committee reviewed and approved the recommendation of the Fire Chief Search Committee. The Personnel Committee will present their recommendation to the full Board of Commissioners at their next meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the Special Personnel Committee meeting minutes of August 15, 2016, as submitted.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

There were no appointments to report. The Executive Director pointed out that according to the By-Laws, a new Assistant Treasurer needs to be appointed due to the resignation of the current Assistant Treasurer. The President responded that the By-Laws state an Assistant Treasurer needs to be appointed within 60 days. An Assistant Treasurer will be appointed at the Organizational Meeting held after the election on October 3, 2016.

CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

- A. Report of the Town Council Liaison. Councilwoman Slade was not present at the last meeting, but wanted to extend a thank you to former Commissioner Mark Langton for his service on the Board of Commissioners. Former Commissioner Langton had resigned his position on the Board at the last meeting. Councilwoman Slade also reported that the Town Council will be continuing its local business tours. On September 28, 2016, they will be visiting Phoenix farm and possibly Edgewood Party Rentals. A joint meeting will be held with the Board of Education and the Board of Finance next month to discuss what is being proposed with the schools. The second annual Mayor's Ball is being held October 1. Tickets are still available for \$100 each. The proceeds will benefit the Middlesex Hospital Cancer Center and the American Legion Valor Green. A meeting was held last week with Eversource regarding the installation of gas in the Raymond Place area. She reported that Residents seem enthused but there needs to be an interest of at least 66 residents that are interested in the program. The downtown drainage project was completed in July.
- B. Reports of the Special Committees
1. Public Safety Tower Committee. There was no meeting.
 2. Building Committee. Commissioner Colligan reported that a bid was done for the Coles Road Firehouse roof. A meeting will be scheduled to discuss the bids.
 3. Safety Committee. There was no meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Commissioners' Comments. Commissioner Swanson addressed the group by stating on October 3, 2016, the Board of Commissioners will have its annual meeting to elect 3 Commissioners to the Board whose terms have expired. Commissioner Swanson will have served 30 years on the Board of Commissioners. He is now 83 years old and has had some health issues. His term will be expiring on October 3, 2016, and he has decided not to seek re-election for another term. He spoke about his experiences on the Board. Commissioner Swanson received a standing ovation.

Commissioner Bellamo addressed the group by resigning his position as Commissioner on the Board of Commissioners effective September 21, 2016. His term is due to expire October 2017. He read a statement discussing his years of service to the Fire District and Fire Department. A copy of this document has been filed with the minutes. Commissioner Bellamo has served 36 years combined with the Fire Department and Fire District. He stated he could no longer work with this Commission over its "appalling actions" over the last year. He disagreed 100% with the actions taken. He is disgusted with its lack of transparency and accountability over the removal of the past Fire Chief. He stated as with former Commissioner Langton last month, he cannot let it go and is tired of being angry. He discussed some of his experiences and accomplishments over the years. He will still be available to listen or be a sounding board to anyone in the Department who needs it. He will also be available to share his knowledge and experience. He acknowledged his children who he is most proud of and following in his footsteps in fire service for the right reasons. He acknowledged his wife and assured her that she can rest easy because he has found peace and is ready to move on. He stated that by resigning his position now, it allows the Board to fill his vacancy at the next election to bring the Board to its appropriate staffing level. In conclusion, he stated he loved serving the Town and its residents and considers himself a lucky man. Commissioner Bellamo received a standing ovation.

President Seidl reported that contracts have been completed for the Executive Director and the Fire Chief.

B. Budgetary Adjustments. There were no adjustments to report.

C. Approval of Contracts/Contractors. There were no contracts or contractors to report.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Bellamo stated she is proud of her husband and his years of service to the Department, and for sticking to what he believes in.

Commissioner Hamlin thanked the Bellamo family for all their years of hard work and dedication to the Fire Service.

Mertie Terry addressed the group by stating she is heartbroken that two dedicated individuals have resigned from the Commission. They are wished all the best. Their service was much appreciated.

A firefighter addressed the group and thanked Commissioner Bellamo for all the help and knowledge he has provided over the years to him. He also expressed his dissatisfaction with the leadership of the Commission.

Nicole LaTerra, 13 Hicksville Road, Cromwell, CT, addressed the group thanking Commissioners Langton, Bellamo and Swanson for all their years of service. She wanted everyone to think about why these individuals are stepping down, and to remember there is an election coming up. Their shoes are awfully big shoes to fill. She urged everyone to consider what is best for the District and the Fire Department, and asked that people keep that in mind and consider running for election. The Fire Department needs to be represented fairly.

Samantha Slade, 128 Nooks Hill Road, Cromwell, CT, addressed the group speaking as a member of the Fire Department rather than her Town Council position. She thanked Commissioners Langton, Swanson and Bellamo for all the service they provided to the Fire Department.

Christie Carpino, 29 Sovereign Ridge, Cromwell, CT addressed the group thanking the individuals that are stepping down as Commissioners stating they will be missed and are irreplaceable. She thanked them all from the bottom of her heart and acknowledged Commissioner Bellamo as one of the first people to welcome her to Cromwell.

Nicole LaTerra asked about the status of the Trust Fund accounts. President Seidl responded that a meeting had been scheduled, however, due to illness the meeting was postponed. Now the audit for the District is about to begin, and it is unclear when the meeting will be rescheduled. The Executive Director explained that thus far, three additional accounts have been opened at Citizens Bank. The funds have been moved into those accounts. All the accounting has been reviewed in terms of the funds being in the right accounts. A meeting will be scheduled as soon as the audit is completed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Murphy and unanimously approved to enter into Executive Session at 7:35 PM. The Executive Director was invited to the Executive Session.

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to adjourn Executive Session at 8:10 PM. No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Hamlin, seconded by Commissioner Swanson and unanimously approved to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:12 PM.

ATTEST:

Julius Neto, Secretary

Nancy Deegan
Recording Secretary
10-3-16