

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

Fire and Water Divisions

Tuesday, September 25, 2018

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 25, 2018, 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 Johnathon Hamlin (Vice Chairman), Charles Epstein, David Colligan, Robert Donohue, Roger Rukowicz, Julius Neto and Jason Hinnners attended. Also attending were Fire Chief Michael Terenzio, Deputy Fire Chief Michael Salonia, Operations Director S. William Jarzavek, Town Liaison Samantha Slade and Michael Alibrio from Premier Accounting. Commissioners absent were Lee Brow and Craig Murphy.

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Hinnners and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as submitted with the following addition in Item XII. Executive Session: Discuss the Executive Director position.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Brett Hallden, President of the Cromwell Professional Firefighters Association, addressed the Board. He gave his background as being involved with the Cromwell Fire Department for 26 years. His mother was also a volunteer. He explained that 16 weeks ago he filed two FOI requests for some pertinent information. There has been a series of phone calls, text messages and emails with members of the Board. The FOI requests were brought back to him with requests to change, reduce or withdraw them. He gave a timeline of 4 weeks which the State law requires. After a response is received within 4 days, a timeline is given. It has been 16 weeks and Mr. Hallden has no information. The last he has heard is that the District is not going to furnish that information. As an employee, a former Town resident and someone who has been involved for a long time with this organization, he is sorry to say that he has to file a complaint with the Freedom of Information Commission and have a legal representative try to justify why the law cannot be followed. It is unfortunate and causes him a lot of internal grief.

- A. Meet the Candidates. Ms. Mertie Terry has filed paperwork to run for a Commissioner's spot at the election on October 1. She stated she thinks it would be wonderful to be a part of this Commission. She knows a lot of people in Town and thinks it will be interesting to have someone on the Board who has been a First Selectman in Town and was married to someone who was the First Selectman in Town. She thinks the Fire Department is great, and they do a great job. She thinks the accomplishments of the Department and their hard work are not known to the citizens of Cromwell. If she gets elected, she would like to see the Town recognize the Fire Service for all the work they do, and she would like to help to get the word out about the great job the Fire District and its members do. Jokingly she stated she is old, a female and has a short shelf life. She is proud of the District and wants the opportunity to serve.

Mr. Allan Spotts also has filed paperwork to run for a Commissioner's spot. He stated he is running because he wants to bring his experiences as a four-term Town Councilman/First Selectman. He has experience with Former Commissioner Neto on the Town's Board of Finance. During his four terms on the Town Council/First Selectman, he was the liaison for the Fire District. That experience gave him a sense of what the Commission is all about. This is something he has always been interested in, and decided there is no time like the present. He has also been involved with the Town of Cromwell since 1999. He served on the 350th Anniversary celebration selling items to defray the cost of the event. He also served on various committees and commissions in Town. He served with Stan Terry on the Board of Selectman when he was first elected to the Board of Selectmen and later served with Mertie Terry. He feels his background and experiences serve well to prepare him for serving on the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Robert Donohue is running for re-election to the Board after serving out the term of a former Commissioner (16 months) before his term was over. He stated that he attends most of the meetings held whether Board meetings or Committee meetings. He looks forward to continuing to serve the District as a Commissioner if re-elected.

Mr. Charles Epstein is also running for re-election to the Board after the expiration of his term this year. He stated that he has served the District for approximately 3-3 ½ years. He has served on numerous committees, with the By-Laws Committee being one of the most important. He stated that the Committee worked very hard to change the By-Laws to make them more transparent to the public and the Fire District's membership. He believes that the public should know more about what the Fire District and its members do. He explained the importance of the work that is done by Fire and EMS services, and the public should have more knowledge about the operation of those services. That includes the work being done on radios and communications. He thanked his fellow Commissioners that he has had the pleasure to work with. The work has not been easy, and there have been many meetings both regular and special meetings. He feels there is a lot he has done over the last 3 years and still has a lot to do over the next 3 years. He discussed his background which was in emergency medical services and law enforcement. He has over 42 years in emergency medical services and over 20 years in law enforcement. He is also an instructor for EMS and Dispatchers. He feels these are important times for us. The District needs to move forward. He stated there is a good Fire Chief in place, and we need to support him. He asked for everyone's vote.

APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF
AUGUST 21, 2018

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Rukowicz and approved 6 to 1 to approve the Board of Commissioners' Meeting minutes of August 21, 2018, as submitted. There was one abstention from Commissioner Neto.

APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF
AUGUST 27, 2018

A motion was made by Commissioner Rukowicz, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved 6 to 1 to accept the minutes of the Special Board of Commissioners' Meeting of August 27, 2018, as submitted. There was one abstention from Commissioner Neto.

APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF
SEPTEMBER 13, 2018

The Recording Secretary stated that there was a meeting on the calendar scheduled for September 13, 2018. The Recording Secretary was not invited to this meeting as the agenda noted it was to be in Executive Session. No minutes were forwarded to the Recording Secretary.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to table the minutes for September 13, 2018.

READING OF COMMUNICATIONS & WRITTEN APPEALS TO THE BOARD

Commissioner Epstein had a letter of hardship that he read to the group. The letter was from Naseem Khan of 90 West Street, Cromwell, CT. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. The individual had received an ambulance bill for \$799.94, and was looking for relief due to some personal financial hardship.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to forward this issue to the Executive Director for review.

REPORTS OF THE STAFF

- A. Executive Director. The Executive Director's Report for August had been previously submitted for review. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Commissioner Epstein had comments regarding the last item on the Executive Director's Report for an RFP for ambulance billing. Commissioner Epstein was tasked with coming up with three names to consider for RFP's. He has the three names, but he asked that this be tabled until after the Board elections in October when there will be a new Board in place with new officers. Commissioner Epstein read the Executive Director's Report for August in the absence of the Executive Director. Commissioner Hamlin discussed the election of three Commissioners scheduled for October 1, 2018. It was learned that Craig Murphy, President of the Board of Commissioners, is resigning due to commitments of his current job. A Special Election will need to be scheduled in order for someone to be elected to fill the rest of Commissioner Murphy's term in office. An election will need to be scheduled within 60 days of the stated resignation, according to the By-Laws. It was also noted in the report that Mr. Allan Spotts' first name is spelled with two "l's" and not one as noted in the report.

A motion was made by Commissioner Neto, seconded by Commissioner Hinnens and unanimously approved to accept the Executive Director's report for August as submitted.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Donohue and unanimously approved to table the RFP for ambulance billing until after the election on October 1. Commissioner Hamlin will advise the Executive Director of this change.

- B. Financial Report. The Financial Report for August had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Commissioner Neto asked if there were any areas of concern in the report. Mr. Alibrio reported that the auditors will be coming in on October 9 to do their field work. Commissioner Neto suggested that whoever the new Treasurer might be after the elections that the person meet with Mr. Alibrio and the auditors to introduce themselves and make themselves known. It would also be a good opportunity to ask any questions or voice any concerns they may have.

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

- C. Fire Department Chief. The 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. Commissioner Colligan requested that the Chief include with his report a copy of the Firehouse reservations calendar which lists all the meetings being held for the month. This will make everyone aware of activities being held before trying to book space. Commissioner Epstein asked the Chief to highlight his report for the benefit of the public that is in attendance. He discussed the car seat installation program that was implemented when the Chief first began here. It has been and continues to be successful. The Cromwell Fire Department is getting high praises for its commitment to safety of the public. The Town of East Haddam has asked Cromwell to help them run their car seat clinic. He credited Brett Hallden and Brandon Hinds for working to receive a grant for this program. He also reported that turnover on ambulance calls are next to nothing. He complimented the Department members on their dedication, and he is proud to be a part of it. He also stated that they continue with car washes.

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

- D. 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 highlighted his report for the benefit of the public. He reported that they pumped a little over 66 million gallons for the month. System flushing continues but should be completed by the end of the month. He explained his staff's assignments. He also noted they have an addition to their staff for support. There is now an Administrative Assistant assigned to assist with paperwork and other administrative duties at the Water Garage. It has been a big help.

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

REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. District Operations Committee. There was no meeting.
- B. Executive Committee. There was no meeting.

- C. Fire Operations Committee. A meeting was held on August 21, 2018. 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 Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Hinnens and unanimously approved to accept the Fire Operations Committee meeting minutes of August 21, 2018, as submitted.

1. Communications Subcommittee. Commissioner Colligan reported that he also stated in the Fire Operations Committee meeting held this evening that the Committee is investigating its options with the State of CT. He noted that there is a need to move forward because communications are failing. There have been a few incidents over the last few weeks that have been dangerous for personnel.

- D. Pension Committee. There was no meeting.
- E. Personnel Committee. There was no meeting.
- F. Water Operations Committee. There was no meeting.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

There were no appointments to report.

CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

- A. Report of the Town Council Liaison. Ms. Samantha Slade reported that the most recent Town Council meeting was held on September 12, 2018. There will be a Special meeting held Thursday, 27, 2018. She reported the Town is in the midst of putting up the new scoreboard at the football field. There have been some unexpected delays, but the installation should be completed by the next home game. The Council's business visits will be continuing. They are planning to get to Alcap Ridge. She noted that the Mayor had sent a request to the Fire District for a meeting. Ms. Slade was asked to pass on that the Mayor has not gotten a response. The Library expansion is proceeding. The Town is assisting with the sidewalks on the project. The Health Department is hosting a flu clinic on October 9 from 10 AM - 6 PM, at Cromwell Town Hall in the gym. They are adding electronic forms to their website from the Human Resource Director to be compliant with the State of CT guidelines. Grants were obtained for a Senior Bus and cemetery upkeep.

B. Reports of the Special Committees

1. Public Safety Tower Committee. A meeting was held on September 7, 2018. Minutes had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Commissioner Rukowicz reported that the Tower is located off of Shunpike Road. An annual structural inspection was done shortly after the September meeting. An official report has not been published, but Commissioner Rukowicz learned that the Tower is structurally sound. Two cables were removed from the Tower that were no longer being used. He also noted that on the Tower, all occupants are at the right height. A HAM radio has been removed from one of the small buildings up there. The 2018/2019 budget has been completed and approved at the meeting. He

noted the Committee will lose \$23,500 in the last seven months of this year because T-Mobile and Pocket Communications are not renewing their lease. They have renewed contracts with five year renewals so the equipment located on the Tower now is good until 2029 and 2040. A radio study is being done on the Town radios and Fire Department radios. Some equipment will be removed, but the study is being done to determine what will be removed. The weight limits on the Tower are still at their maximum. The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 7, 2018, at 10 AM at 1 West Street.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to accept the Public Safety Tower Committee meeting minutes of September 7, 2018, as submitted.

2. Safety/Building Committee. Commissioner Hinnners reported that there was no meeting, and the next meeting is scheduled for October 11, 2018, at 5:30 PM, at 1 West Street.
3. By-Laws Committee. Commissioner Epstein reported that there have been several meetings held. The Committee agreed at their last meeting that they would forward a final draft to the full Board of Commissioners for approval. However, there is a personnel matter being reviewed, and the By-Laws have been put on hold temporarily until after the election. Meeting minutes have been previously distributed and reviewed for meetings held on July 31, 2018, August 7, 2018 and August 16, 2018.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hinnners, seconded by Commissioner Donohue and unanimously approved to accept the meeting minutes of the By-Laws Committee for July 31, 2018, August 7, 2018 and August 16, 2018, as submitted.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Commissioners' Comments. Commissioner Epstein took a couple of minutes to thank Commissioner Neto for his years of service to the District and the Commission. A round of applause was given to Commissioner Neto. Commissioner Neto responded by stating it has been a privilege to serve. He complimented the group as a good team.
- B. Budgetary Adjustments. There were no adjustments to report.
- C. Approval of Contracts/Contractors. There were no contracts or contractors to report.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments to report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

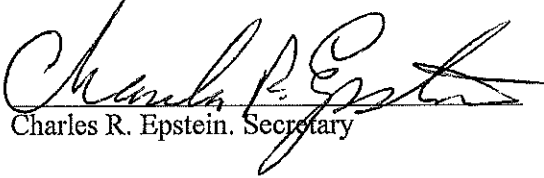
A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to adjourn the regular Board of Commissioners' meeting and enter into Executive Session at 7:49 PM to discuss the Executive Director position.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Neto and unanimously approved to adjourn Executive Session at 8:15 PM and resume the regular Board of Commissioners' meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Neto and unanimously approved to adjourn the regular Board of Commissioners' meeting at 8:16 PM.

ATTEST:


Charles R. Epstein, Secretary

Nancy Deegan
Recording Secretary
10-11-18