

Cromwell Fire District

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FIRE DISTRICT OFFICE
WATER DIVISION

FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Fire and Water Divisions

Tuesday, April 18, 2023, 6:00 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, April 18, 2023, at 6:00 PM, at the Coles Road Firehouse, 105 Coles Road, Cromwell, CT to discuss and act upon Fire and Water Division business.

Commissioners Roger Rukowicz, Charles Epstein, Donald Smith, Mertie Terry, Robert McIntyre, Chip Darius and John Sokolowski attended. Also attending were Executive Director Julius Neto, Water Operations Manager Joseph Palmieri, Finance Manager Michael Lupkas, Assistant Fire Chief of Training & Safety Karl Neubecker and Firefighter Union President Alan Dominy. Commissioners David Colligan and Robert Donohue were absent.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM, by President Rukowicz. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Rukowicz.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Sokolowski and unanimously approved to accept the Agenda as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

James Rude, 25 Highridge Road, commented he was happy to see that the June 30, 2022, audited financial statements have been issued. He knows they are on the agenda for the Commission later on this evening. He continues to recommend that the issuance of those financial statements in future years be issued on a much more timely basis. We are almost 10 months through the next fiscal year. That information from June 30, 2022, is very dated at this juncture. Again, Mr. Rude would recommend moving that up by many, many months. The audited financial statements includes a complete set of financial statements, income statement balance sheet, changes in fund balance and cash flow statements. On a monthly basis the public only sees at these meetings the income statement vs. the budget. He would continue to recommend to the Commission that the remainder of the financial statements, the balance sheet, the change in fund balance, the cash flow statements be put together and reviewed by the Commission at least on a quarterly basis. He also made the same comment relative to some ratio analyses. Ratios are much easier to understand

than some of the raw numbers. He would suggest that the implementation of periodic reporting at least quarterly of days cash on hand, days revenue and accounts receivable, average age of plant, debt to equity ratios be added to the quarterly financial package.

There has been quite a lot of press over the course of the past handful or two of months relative to bank collapse. Included in Footnote 2 on pg. 36 of the audited financial statements are a couple of comments under the Deposits section in the footnotes. There are 2 sentences that Mr. Rude thinks are very important, "the District does not have a policy for deposits." The second sentence also says, "the District also does not have a custodial credit risk policy." He strongly encourages the Commission to think about adoption of policies in both those regards as well as to consider potentially putting some cash assets in the custodial accounts. If the \$2.5 million was in banks that ended up going south, FDIC insurance would only cover a very small portion. He thanked the Board for their time this evening.

APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF
MARCH 21, 2023

A motion was made by Commissioner Sokolowski, seconded by Commissioner Smith and unanimously approved to accept the Board of Commissioners' Meeting minutes of March 21, 2023, as submitted.

APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF
APRIL 11, 2023

A motion was made by Commissioner Terry, seconded by Commissioner Sokolowski and unanimously approved to accept the Special Board of Commissioners' Meeting minutes of April 11, 2023, as submitted.

READING OF COMMUNICATIONS & WRITTEN APPEALS TO THE BOARD

Commissioner Epstein read a thank you note sent from the Executive Director for a box of fruit that was sent to him when he was out recovering from a medical procedure.

REPORTS OF THE STAFF

- A. Executive Director. The Executive Director's Report for March had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. The office has been busy working on budgets. He reported about a case of Legionnaire's disease that was discovered at one of the assisted living communities. A resident passed away from this event. The person had some underlying health issues as well as contracting the bacteria associated with Legionnaire's.

Once it was discovered the proper Town authorities were contacted. Mr. Palmieri and Mr. Neto proceeded in getting samples of the water to test the amount of residual chlorine. A conference call was held the next day with all parties involved. They discussed the status of the situation as well as what the future plan will be. The situation was met with complete support to that community by all involved. The chlorine residual testing met all standards of the DPH, Drinking Water Division. All tests that were done indicate that Cromwell's water is OK.

They continue to support that community for a long-term solution. It was confirmed that active chlorine existed and there is no indication that Cromwell is a source of this.

Commissioner Darius complimented Mr. Palmieri and the Executive Director for acting on this proactively and having scientific documentation. It will be very valuable as the process unfolds in establishing the credibility of the District's water system. Commissioner Darius stated it is a job well done.

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

- B. Financial Report. The Financial Report for March had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Lupkas reported that the District has collected roughly \$4.7 million of tax dollars which includes the State Grant-In-Aid. That is 106% of the budgeted amount. There are still a few months in the year, but at this time in the fiscal year, there is a limited amount of revenue received. The District has met its budget which is a good thing.

There were 128 EMS calls for the month. The receipts year to date is 9.1% higher than the same period last year. Water produced was very close to the average. Although the numbers are not reflected in the report, they have issued third quarter billing. It was roughly \$507,000. This is roughly 1.3% more than last year at this time. Regarding accounts that are over \$1,000 in collection, the list has gone down by three accounts. 63% was collected on accounts with over a 120 day balance with collection efforts. The audit was completed and filed with the State on March 25, 2023.

Commissioner Epstein complimented the Executive Director and his staff for making the decision to go to a different billing company for ambulance bills. Mr. Neto thanked the staff that made the decision to use ESO software which allows for simplicity of processing of data early on. They are processing the charts more efficiently and effectively allowing the billing company to get that first bill out sooner.

The Executive Director had an updated report on collections. \$13,000 was received from one of the attorneys that handles delinquent water accounts. The process of checks and balances is working. It is important to note that the District will work with any customer to set up payment arrangements for those experiencing financial hardships.

Commissioner Darius asked about the finances of the Volunteer Association as an independent Organization. Is there any transfer of funds that will occur into their bank account that the District has been temporarily overseeing? Mr. Neto confirmed that the Association does exist. They have their own Board of Directors or Executive Committee. There is almost \$30,000 in that account. Those funds were raised by the old volunteers, and are still in the account. Melissa Roming and Julius Neto are the signatories. Mr. Neto is on the account temporarily. At some point all the responsibility will be transferred to the Board of Directors. They will operate within their Bylaws. They are under the umbrella of the Cromwell Fire District and Fire Department.

A motion was made by Commissioner Darius, seconded by Commissioner Sokolowski and unanimously approved to accept the Financial Report as submitted.

- C. Fire Department Chief. The Chief's Report had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Chief Brade was attending a conference this week so Assistant Chief Neubecker filled in. He highlighted a few things on the report. He and Assistant Chief Driscoll have been in Cromwell for about a month now and are getting acclimated to things. They look forward to bringing forth new operational training in the future. Regarding training, the career staff went through ParaTech rescue equipment that is on Squad 1. It will be in service soon. They are waiting on some parts in order to get some equipment mounted. The Department received some specialized training in a BraunAbility customized van. These vans are used for people with special needs. The new ambulance is due to arrive tomorrow. The radio has not been received yet, but the ambulance is wired for it. The new Chief's vehicle is in as well. A new electrical cord was installed to get the gear washer up and running at the West Street station. Ass't Chief Neubecker was available to answer any questions.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sokolowski, seconded by Commissioner Smith and unanimously approved to accept the Chief's Report for March as submitted.

1. Fire Marshal's Office. The Fire Marshal was on vacation. The FMO report had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Commissioners were asked if they had any questions. Questions would be forwarded to the Fire Marshal when he returned if they could not be answered in this meeting. The Deputy Fire Marshal and Fire Inspector have been available to cover the FMO while Mr. Holmes is away.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sokolowski, seconded by Commissioner Smith and unanimously approved to accept the Fire Marshal's report for March as submitted.

- D. Water Operations. The Operations Report for March had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Palmieri highlighted some things on his report. He discussed the 2022/2023 Sanitary Survey that took place a couple of weeks ago. It went very well. This is when the Department of Public Health visits to do an inspection. Mr. Palmieri works with them for a few weeks prior and after the inspection. All the facilities and pump stations were checked. Mr. Palmieri is working with DPH on a couple of minor issues.

The Consumer Confidence Report was sent out. The Water Department had another great year. There has been great water quality, no issues. President Rukowicz asked about the upgrading of water meters. Mr. Palmieri stated that the Department is working towards getting more radio readers to make the process more efficient. He anticipates that within the next 2 to 3 years to be up to speed with radio readers. There are approximately 800 left to do, and they can only do a certain amount per year. Mr. Neto added that in the next budget they have allocated more resources for this project.

Mr. Palmieri explained how the Water Department has increased its metering to include everything in Town that had not been metered before. The Water Department is now at a rate of 11% undetected water. The Department of Public Health has a standard of 15%. The Water Department is proposing a water audit in the next budget. That will look at the last 3 years-worth of data. Water audits are required by DPH every 3 years.

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Smith and unanimously approved to accept the Operations Report for March as presented.

- E. Communication Center Report. There was no report. Mr. Lonergan was attending a conference.

REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. District Operations. There was no meeting.
- B. Executive. A meeting was held on April 10, 2023, to discuss and review the 2023/2024 budget. President Rukowicz thanked the Department Heads, the Finance Manager, the Executive Director and some of the members of the Executive Committee who accomplished working on the budget and finalizing it at the April 10 meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Sokolowski and unanimously approved to accept the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of April 10, 2023, as submitted.

- C. Fire Operations. The April 10, 2023, meeting had been canceled. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 8, 2023, at 5:30 PM.
 - 1. Communications Committee. There was no meeting.
 - 2. Apparatus Committee. There was no meeting.
- D. Pension. There was no meeting. The next meeting is July 5, 2023, at 5:30 PM.
- E. Personnel. The April 11, 2023, meeting had been canceled. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 9, 2023.
- F. Water Operations. There was no meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 3, 2023.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

There were no appointments to report.

CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

- A. Report of the Town Council Liaison. There was no report. The Executive Director will follow up with the Mayor regarding liaison responsibilities for both the District and the Town.
- B. Reports of the Special Committees
 - 1. Public Safety Tower Committee. There was no meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 2, 2023.
 - 2. Health & Safety/Building Committee. A meeting was held on Wednesday, April 5, 2023. Minutes had been distributed for review. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office.

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Terry and unanimously approved to table the minutes of the Health & Safety/Bldg. Committee meeting of April 5, 2023, because they were not signed.

3. Bylaws Committee. There was no meeting. The next meeting/workshop is scheduled for tomorrow night, Wednesday, April 19, 2023, at 5:30 PM, at the Coles Road Firehouse. Since this has been considered a workshop/meeting, there will be no formal notes or minutes taken.
 4. Public Relations/Community Outreach Committee. President Rukowicz commented that the newsletter just sent out was great. A good job done by Commissioners Darius and Epstein and those involved. President Rukowicz has suggested that in the next issue there be a diagram of a fully outfitted firefighter with the cost of all the equipment they are wearing times two. He would like the public to realize the cost of outfitting a firefighter, with a spare set of gear which is required by standards.
- C. Todd Gagnon Plaque Dedication/Update. Commissioner Sokolowski had a long conversation with Cheryl Gagnon. She was concerned that her children be part of a ceremony. He also spoke with one of Todd's daughters. Right now they are working on a date for the family. Commissioner Sokolowski also spoke with the Firefighter Union President and the Fire Marshal that this dedication be a separate ceremony from the "wetdown." The ceremony should be something specific to Todd as a dedication. Commissioner Sokolowski reached out to Melissa Roming to have the Color Guard be part of the ceremony. It is possible to have bagpipes if requested. The ceremony would be approximately 30 to 45 minutes in length. President Rukowicz thanked Lt. Alan Dominy and Commissioner Sokolowski for working together on this project. They are leaving it up to the family to determine who should be invited to the ceremony because Todd was married twice and had children and step children.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Commissioners' Comments. Commissioner Terry learned through the Cromwell Children's Coalition that there is a student in the high school that has a dangerous illness. She would like the Executive Director to reach out to the high school and ask them if there is something we can do to help. She would like the Commission to be vocal that they are there for support. She wanted to make sure that the Board agrees with her suggestion to reach out to the high school.

Commissioner Darius asked about the status of the Mutual Aid agreement with Rocky Hill. Mr. Neto stated that the agreement that the Board approved was finally signed off. Cromwell will provide mutual aid support for fire and EMS to the two properties that are being developed on that street. The Town will only plow to Cromwell's boundary. It will be the responsibility of the two residents living there to clear a path for emergency services. Cromwell has no jurisdiction over that. MDC has signed an agreement with the property owners of the larger lot authorizing Cromwell Water to service the house that exists there.

Commissioner Epstein reported that last Saturday all six fire police took a day long certification class that consisted of 4 hrs. of classroom, a practical exam and a written exam to get certified as CT Fire Police Officers. He asked about the firefighter that was injured on

the highway call. Lt. Dominy reported that he is no longer using crutches, has been doing physical therapy and getting stronger.

- B. Budgetary Adjustments. There were no adjustments to report.
- C. Approval of Contracts/Contractors. There were no contracts or contractors to report.
- D. Presentation and Discussion of Audit. Commissioners were given a copy of the audit report for review. They were encouraged to take it home over the weekend. It was also noted that each Commissioner received an electronic copy via email. Mr. Neto noted that page 19 has been changed to add leases to one of the line items. Mr. Rude had commented that there was a Section that identified \$2,790,719 as deferred as flow of resources. It did not have a descriptive on the left side. The leases are associated with the District. That is the new item that has been added. He asked that the Commissioners insert the new page 19 in the report.

The usual auditors attend the Commissioners' meeting where the audit report is presented. This year Jason is on medical leave, and Sue could not get away to attend because it is tax season. Once the Board has reviewed the report, if there are questions, Jason and/or Sue are willing to come back to address them. Questions can also be forwarded through email.

Mr. Lupkas provided an overview. The District's fiscal year ends June 30 of each year. The District is required by the State to submit an audit done by an outside firm by December 31st of each year. This year an extension was needed because of the leases with the Tower. The audit consisted of going through each account on the balance sheet side. It needs to be reviewed to make sure balances are where they are supposed to be. Making sure that collectables or what is being paid out and paid time off are accurately reflected. The auditors then take the numbers and backup to do their review. They follow up with Mike with any additional questions or requests to look at. Everything was ready on time except for the outstanding lease issue. The audit is also on the District's website.

- Regarding the report itself, pgs. 1-3 is the auditor's opinion. That is the only thing in the report that is their work product. Everything else in there is the District handing over the information and reviewing and preparing it for the presentation. The audit was completed and filed on March 25, 2023.
- Page 4 is called management discussion and analysis. There will be details in there regarding different sections and how to interpret what is in the financial statements.
- It was noted that the General Fund, Fund Balance is at \$1.2 million. The tax collection rate was 98.8% which is a very high collection rate.
- On the Water Department side they had an operating income of \$166,000. With gains and losses it becomes \$199,000.
- The District issued bonds last year. The District's AA rating from Standards & Poors was reaffirmed on all the outstanding debt.
- Page 14 discusses capital assets and what the breakdown is. The General Fund of the District is listed as part of the governmental fund category. The Water Department is called an Enterprise Fund. It operates like a business. The accounting rules are a little bit different than the General Fund.
- Page 19 is the balance sheet for the governmental funds. The total fund balance is where assets are greater than liabilities. \$1.5 million is the total fund balance. The General fund is at \$1,258,000.

- Revenues and expenses are on page 21 for the governmental funds. The line items show what was spent in each category.
- Page 24 is revenue and expenses for the water fund. Page 27 discusses the pension. \$1,667,000 is the District's net position which is 95.5% of what the liability is.
- Page 62 is significant where it shows the original budget, where the final budget was because there were no adjustments last year, what the actuals were and what the variance is.
- Page 74 which is the last couple of pages, is also the auditors' pages. It is called the Independent Auditors Report of Internal Controls over Financial Reporting.
- Mr. Lupkas noted that the District has 6 months to get the audit out. He explained that the numbers in the Tower Fund are what caused the delay in the audit. The long term revenue that is expected from the Tower leases calculated back on a discounted rate so that they have the expected interest coming in. This was a new standard that was put in place last year which was never reported before.

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Sokolowski and unanimously approved to accept the Audit as presented.

E. Discussion and Possible Approval of FY 2023/2024 CFD Budget with Recommendations from the Executive Committee. The Executive Director distributed the latest draft of the budget recommended by the Executive Committee. Mr. Neto explained the process with the input from the Division heads. He gave a quick overview.

- Revenue will be increasing by 20% due to the re-evaluation done by the Town. The numbers presented to the Executive Committee had a very conservative revenue number. They have identified an additional \$174,00 in revenue.
- The debt service year over year was increased by 9.35%. That is now a part of the Communications capital project. Last year the District was only paying on the interest rates. Now they are paying interest rates and principal.
- Insurance benefits are up 9.91%.
- The administrative account increased by 3.3%.
- The Office of the Chief and Fire Dept. increased by 17.37%. Part of that increase year over year is that last year the District did not fund the two assistant chiefs for the whole year. This year the two assistant chiefs are fully budgeted.
- EMS/fire operations increased by 7.2%. Part of that is the payroll portion. The payroll portion including part-time reflects a 14.28% increase. It was noted that the safer grant has expired meaning that firefighters hired now need to be fully funded by the District.
- Signals & Alarms increased by 7.2%.
- The FMO has a decrease of 1.79%. The Admin. Ass't. retired in the FMO. The strategy with those dollars was to hire another part-time inspector.
- Payroll increased by 17.4%. CBA or union contract obligations contributed to that number. There was QA that was used in the EMD program which people are now being compensated for.
- The Communications' increase by 20%.
- Regarding the Water Division, payroll is up by 10.56%. The water staff are climbing the salary matrix which shows the increase. Mr. Palmieri and Mr. Neto put into the budget an internal promotion to a supervisory role. The goal is to create a role for one of his team members to assist him with day-to-day operations.

The rest of the budget focuses on public safety. The Water Department works to protect the water source and distribute it safely. The present budget does not include a mil rate increase or a water rate increase. The re-evaluation will bring in additional revenue. There are capital items totaling \$379,500. There are regulatory items that are part of the capital. There are also infrastructure improvements that are critical. The District does not have any federal, stimulus or grant money unlike the Town.

Commissioner Darius asked how this budget changes weekend staffing. He referred to the second ambulance crew. Mr. Neto stated that there were dollars identified for that program. The dollars were put in and then removed because of the expense. There is a need but not consistently. The Board has the opportunity through this process to have a discussion and make changes. It was not considered because of other priorities that were identified.

Commissioner Smith asked about the additional holiday that was put in the budget. Does the Board need to incorporate it into the holiday schedule. Mr. Neto said it will be. It was the responsibility of the Executive Committee to fund it. It will be up to the Board to accept that as an additional holiday and negotiate it with the CBA's. The policy would need to be modified to include 13 holidays just like the Town.

Commissioner Sokolowski asked if there was anything in the budget that addresses the replacement of the ladder truck. Mr. Neto said there was not. There was \$100,000 that was added as seed money. That means there is \$300,000 earmarked in the budget for apparatus replacement. If and when Truck 1 is sold, it was decided last year that any funds from Truck 1 will be put into the apparatus seed money fund.

Commissioner Darius fully supports the Water Department's expenditure requests. He has toured the property with Joe. He had an excellent tour, and highly recommended it to all the Commissioners. He also believes it is very important to fund a second ambulance, daytime hours on the weekends. They are consistently tied up on the weekends and are turning over calls. Numbers are going up and they are only going to go higher. He would like to see coverage for 7 AM to 7 PM on the weekends.

Commissioner Epstein asked that everyone think about the future, that money be put away for the possibility of putting solar panels on the buildings and pump houses. Electricity is going up 57.67%. He knows the District does not have the funding now, but would like to keep it in the back of everyone's mind for the future. Right now there is roughly \$10,000 a month that is being spent on electricity. Mr. Neto will be asking Mr. Lonergan to start doing some research. He would like to find out what the best financial model will be. They would need an outside, non-vendor connected analysis. Any lease greater than 5 years requires Town approval. There would need to be a Town meeting.

Commissioner Sokolowski discussed the second ambulance issue. He wanted to know if anyone had analyzed the numbers. Mr. Neto had reviewed numbers with the Fire Chief and Mr. Lupkas. Mr. Neto explained some options to be able to include the second ambulance. It was not initially included because of other needs. This would be an additional crew on Saturday and Sunday, 12 hours.

The Commissioners requested the Executive Director to go back and look at the numbers for options to include in the budget the funding for a second ambulance crew 12 hrs. on Saturdays and Sundays.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sokolowski, seconded by Commissioner Darius and unanimously approved to approve the Water Division Enterprise Fund budget.

Commissioner Epstein discussed the need and the financial planning for another new ambulance. Mr. Neto discussed having encumbered funds in the budget so they cannot be used for anything else.

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Sokolowski and unanimously approved to table the Fire, EMS and Communication budget approvals.

- F. Discussion and Possible Approval of Filling the Open Career Firefighter Position. After losing another career firefighter to another fire department, Chief Brade was interested in filling that vacancy as soon as possible to minimize overtime. They are looking for the authorization to hire Tim Sullivan who was not next on the list, but he is after the next one on the list. The next person on the list is Jason Lufkas. Mr. Lufkas has left the Department and is working at another career fire department. The list is internal and external. The Chief's office and the Lieutenants are requesting that the Board bypass Mr. Lufkas and go to Tim Sullivan. Mr. Sullivan is a part-time employee for Cromwell and is in good standing. One reason for hiring Mr. Sullivan is that they would be promoting one of their own. The second reason is Mr. Sullivan is a better match to succeed going forward. If the Board would like more specifics, the Executive Director would request going into Executive Session.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sokolowski, seconded by Commissioner Darius and unanimously approved to bypass Mr. Jason Lufkas on the firefighter hiring list and appoint Tim Sullivan who is the next one on the list.

- G. Discussion and Possible Approval of Setting a Date for Budget Vote. The date the Board discussed was Monday, May 22, 2023. There was a discussion on the time set for the vote as well as whether or not there should be a presentation before the vote. There has been concern in the past that citizens were not able to vote when they arrived. They were not allowed to vote during the presentation that took place before voting. There was a lengthy discussion on time of voting. It was suggested to make the voting from 5 PM to 8 PM with no presentation. It is a non-confrontational budget.

PUBLIC COMMENT

James Rude, Highridge Rd., commented that the budget that is being put together on the Fire and Communication side, although the conversation indicates that the mil rate will stay the same, embedded in keeping the mil rate the same is a 20% increase in people's taxes on average. Although there was not a tax increase last year, there was a 20% increase in the tax rate the year before. In the course of 3 years, they are going to have a 40% increase in the rate of taxes. There was also a re-evaluation which increased property values by 20%, but if the mil rate is the same, there is another 20% increase on average in people's taxes. There is a belief that this may not be controversial, but he would recommend to the Commission that they make extremely clear this has a 20% on average and what the taxes are that people will have to pay. From the perspective of continuing to improve communication and transparency, he understands that there are opportunities for people to come to meetings and hear about these things. Some of the meetings get scheduled in such a short timeframe before they occur. For example, the last Executive Committee was noticed only a few days before it happened. It is very hard to have people plan to come to such meetings. The communication in that regard is not always perfect. You can check with Mr. Neto on the details of that comment if you would like. If you really want to have people

come and be involved in the budget process and learn about it, I would suggest that very much like the Town does it, the schedule gets set so far in advance the people know what the schedule is so they can make arrangements to come. The Executive Committee meeting gets scheduled less than a handful of days before it actually happens. It is very hard for you to get information out to enough people if they so choose to be able to come and sit in and learn. Communication continues to be important. He thinks the Commission needs to think about that. It all does relate to transparency. Without communication there is this idea that there are things going on in the back room the voters don't know. He thanked the Board for their time again this evening.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There were no items for Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Darius and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 PM.

ATTEST:

Charles R. Epstein, Secretary

Nancy Deegan
Recording Secretary

DRAFT