

# 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 Department Operations Committee**  
**Communications Subcommittee**

Thursday, October 12, 2017  
5:30 PM  
1 West Street  
Cromwell, CT

Present: Commissioners David Colligan, Charles Epstein, Executive Director Michael Dagostino, Fire Chief Michael Terenzio, Deputy Fire Chief Michael Salonia. Other Commissioners present were: President Craig Murphy, Robert Donohue, Jason Hinnens and Roger Rukowicz. Assistant Fire Chief EMS Robert McIntyre was absent.

- I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM, by Chairman Colligan.
- II. Approval of Agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Deputy Fire Chief Salonia and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as submitted with the addition of Item A under New Business as Update on the Radios and Item B as Review of Norcom Report.
- III. Old Business
  - A. Update on the Radios. Chairman Colligan reported that they are still working on the portables. They are the last pieces of equipment to be worked on. Once that has been completed, new antennas and new cable will be needed on the Tower. Norcom had come in and did a sweep. They found cables that are not being used that might be able to come off the Tower. Some of this information will be available in a report from Norcom that the Chairman will distribute. They have seen some improvements in radio communications. They are finding and correcting issues as they go along. The work on the portables will probably be for another 2 weeks. The Chairman distributed copies of maps that show where the radios will be transmitting and what sites are needed for a voting system. One side of the document is the receive side which is base to portable. The other side of the document is the transmitting side. Both sides of the document showed coverage for most of the town. Areas not covered were also pointed out. Things were a lot worse prior to Norcom's work. Chairman Colligan reported that this report indicates this is the best coverage Cromwell is going to get. There are some voting systems that will be needed, Fiber Optics. It was noted that Angel Alvarado will need to be invited to future Communications meetings. Mr. Alvarado has been working with Mr. Dagostino to try to get commitments from individuals to install voting systems. Chairman Colligan reviewed the sites on the map where voting systems are needed. Each will be a receive site, and Town Hall will be a transmit site. Mr. Dagostino reported that we have already spoken to the Town Manager about putting an antenna on the Tower at Town Hall and some equipment in their radio room. The Town is requiring the District to do a load study on their antenna. Mr. Dagostino had contacted the District's consultant to begin that process. He needs to get information on size of cabling and antenna. There

also needs to be a study done on the strength of the building because the antenna is attached to the roof of the building. Under new codes a load study will cost twice as much as it used to. The Town Manager wants to make sure the study is done before the District can use their Tower. The Chair reviewed the other sites such as the Chemfeed building. That should not be a problem because the District has site control of that building. The Executive Director has not started talks with Holy Apostles about the Water Tank. Mr. Dagostino is still discussing that issue with Attorney Dineen. He has not reached out to any property owners thus far. The District has site control over the Shunpike Tower, and the Shop Rite site will be handled through the Fire Marshal's Office and their permitting process. A BDA system will be required to be installed. The Marriott will be the last area to be addressed.

Chairman Colligan explained that the Norcom report will show where they started, what they found, some of the remedies and what has yet to be done to get communications so that everyone is safe. An estimate of \$46,000 was determined to replace the two antennas and all the cables to the top of the Tower. It was noted that once the work has been completed Cromwell will have good mutual aid capabilities for the Westfield end of Middletown with their condo complexes.

Mr. Dagostino reported that the Water Division received a request to do a water capacity study for a developer who has an application in to develop the old Nike site. If there are a lot of condominiums going in, it might facilitate the District to install something up at that site. Chairman Colligan noted that until Cromwell can get the P-25 system, there will still be some dead areas. But when applying for a grant, it will be acknowledged that Cromwell has put in their 10 percent to building up their system.

Chairman Colligan distributed another handout which was titled, "Cromwell Fire Radio Portables A Bank for VHS portables." It documented channel numbers, usage, frequencies for transmit and receive and other notes. He explained that mobiles will be similar. Fire ground will be the same. TAC 1 will be a new frequency to be used for any major fire. TAC 2 is the old EMS channel that is not changing. A training night will be held before any programming is done. The first session will be a train-the-trainer session with the officers. There will be a regular training session after that. Then a review will be done with the officers.

The Chairman distributed copies of a report from Norcom. He asked that everyone take the opportunity to read the report. Once it is read, there will be a better understanding of why the amount of funding is needed. He distributed another report from Norcom which outlined the 2 antennas and all the parts needed to install. This report was the main reason for the meeting tonight. The District needs to move forward on this issue and will be required to go to a Town meeting to approve funding. The Executive Director will be reviewing with the Tower Committee to see if there is any available funding from them. The Chairman asked that the Committee review the quote and vote on the amount to move forward. The purpose of the new antennas will be to reprogram the new frequencies. The existing antennas are non-public safety grade antennas, and are only producing 20% of coverage capability. Mr. Dagostino asked that everyone review the figures noted on page 3, item 1 of the document. The numbers are based on State bid contracts. The District does not have to follow the bidding procedure because we have received the lowest bid through the State bidding process. Regarding funds for the project, Mr. Dagostino stated that funds had been allocated for a new roof at Coles Road. Those funds need to be reallocated to cover the cost of these upgrades. It will not affect taxes or mil rates. The rationale to be presented to the public should be the funding is available. The District needs permission to reallocate it for the purpose of radio upgrades. Originally these funds were set aside in the capital budget for the roof on Coles Road. This radio upgrade takes priority over the Coles Road roof project to improve coverage and technology of the communication system. This makes our

response safer for volunteers and first responders. The cabling, antennas and duplexers need to be changed. Regarding the duplexers, the old ones need to be retuned and two need to be replaced. Mr. Dagostino added that there are people on or next to the Tower without leases. It is not known how, when or where they were given permission to go up there. He has been working with Attorney Dineen sending out demand letters asking them to get off the tower, or produce documentation proving they have a right to be on the tower. The District was told that there is still cabling dangling off the tower, not connected to anything. It should have been removed, and the District was told that it was removed. This type of situation contributes to the load factor. There are other moving parts that need to be taken care of. There were four coaxes found connected to the side of the tower. Cabling was found to be 1 5/8" when 7/8" cabling is all that is needed. There are also duplicate cables not connected to anything. Their purpose is to be a backup. They also learned that there was never any preventative maintenance performed on any equipment on the tower.

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Deputy Fire Chief Salonia and unanimously approved to accept the estimate of \$46,092.88 from Norcom for the replacement of antenna and coax at the Shunpike Tower for a main transmit antenna system and combiner transmit and receive antenna, combiner modifications for new Fire Department input frequency and third channel. This estimate will be forwarded to the full Board of Commissioners for approval as a recommendation from the Communications Subcommittee.

IV. New Business. There was no new business to report.

V. Adjournment. There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Deputy Fire Chief Salonia and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

David Colligan, Chairman

Nancy Deegan  
Recording Secretary  
10-17-17