

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

Via Conference Call

Tuesday, April 21, 2020

3:30 PM

West Street Firehouse

1 West Street

Cromwell, CT

The Commissioners of the Cromwell Fire District held their monthly Board of Commissioners' meeting on Tuesday, April 21, 2020, at 3:30 PM, via conference call, at the West Street Firehouse, 1 West Street, Cromwell, CT to discuss and act upon Fire and Water Division business.

Per the Executive Order No. 7B, Governor Lamont has ordered and directed that in-person open meeting requirements have been suspended. Therefore, the Commissioner's meeting will be held via conference call. Members of the public may send questions or comments to jneto@cromwellfd.com on any agenda items.

Commissioners Roger Rukowicz (Acting President), Jason Hinnners, David Colligan, Mertie Terry, Allan Spotts and Charles Epstein signed in to the Conference Call. Also signed in were Executive Director Julius Neto, Fire Chief Michael Terenzio, Assistant Fire Chief/Deputy Fire Marshal Jason Brade, IT and Tower Manager Angel Alvarado, Water Operations Manager Joseph Palmieri, Michael Alibrio from BlumShapiro and Town Council Liaison Jennifer Donohue. Commissioner Robert Donohue was not available for the conference call.

The meeting was called to order at 3:34 PM, by Acting President Roger Rukowicz.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Hinnners, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the Agenda as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public were allowed to forward any comments for this meeting via email to the Executive Director as noted above. Mr. Neto indicated he received no emails for public comment on any agenda items.

APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MNIUTES OF
FEBRUARY 18, 2020

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Hinners and unanimously approved to accept the Board of Commissioners' meeting minutes of February 18, 2020, as submitted.

APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF
FEBRUARY 26, 2020

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Hinners and unanimously approved to accept the Special Board of Commissioners' Meeting minutes of February 26, 2020, as submitted.

APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF
MARCH 10, 2020

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Spotts and approved 5 to 0 to accept the Special Board of Commissioners' Meeting minutes of March 10, 2020. Commissioner Hinners abstained.

APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF
APRIL 9, 2020

Minutes from the Special Board of Commissioners' Meeting of April 9, 2020, were not available for review. A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Hinners and unanimously approved to table the minutes from April 9, 2020, for the next monthly meeting.

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 March had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. There was no Commissioner's meeting in March due to the pandemic. The Executive Director did not have anything new to add to his report. He stated he would be happy to answer any questions. There were no questions.

A motion was made by Commissioner Terry, seconded by Commissioner Colligan 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. Alibrio reported that the grant money of \$267,000 was received this month. It has been applied to the cost of the radios and pagers. This frees up some of the bond funds that would have been used for those items. The extra funds can be used for the voting sites for the communications project. Acting President Rukowicz asked if the budget was still on target as we approach the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Alibrio said that the budget is on target for the most part. A lot of money is being spent in preparation of the COVID-19 crisis. He will discuss later in the

meeting what his recommendation will be going forward. Commissioner Colligan asked if Mr. Alibrio had a total of expenses thus far. Special folders have been set up on the network for each department. All invoices and receipts related to COVID-19 will be scanned and sent to that folder. All the information will be gathered and put into a final spreadsheet. Mr. Alibrio will get together all the information he has and forward to the Commissioners.

A motion was made by Commissioner Terry, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the Financial Report for March as presented.

- C. Fire Department Chief. The Chief'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 Chief added to his report by reporting the Fire Department did hire the final two SAFER Firefighters through the grant. One will be starting on the 25th and the other will be starting on the 27th. Both candidates have been part-time scheduled staff who tested and performed very well. Their names are Cory Lafontaine and Tyler Kosterich. The Chief also added that Ladder 3 is back. This issue is on the agenda to discuss later on. The Fire Department has been effectively addressing the COVID-19 disaster. They are also assisting the Town. The Police Chief and Town Manager thanked Chief Terenzio and the District for their assistance.

The Chief gave a shout out to Lt. Hallden, Acting Assistant Chief Colligan and Ryan Colligan for coming up with and putting together the disinfectant spray units which are being used effectively. The Department is out front and doing everything it is supposed to for this crisis. Most of the Chief's activity over the last 6 weeks has been dealing with the disaster. He appreciated all the support from the Commissioners and the Executive Director. A new washer & dryer were purchased for Court St. This was done to make sure everyone's station wear when they are on duty is clean. The appliances were purchased from Lowe's at a significantly reduced price (from \$859 to \$500). One of the part-time scheduled staff, Emily Crocker, also advised the Chief that a washer & dryer would be needed at Coles Rd. because staff have been split. EMS only is at Coles Rd., fire only is at Court St., and part-time unscheduled and volunteers who respond from home are at West St. This was done to keep various groups separate from contamination by other groups. Ms. Crocker was able to have Lowe's identify another washer & dryer to donate. This will happen on Thursday of this week. The Chief will prepare some type of a press release. The Chief thanked Acting Assistant Chief Colligan for helping to coordinate that effort. He has been doing his best to keep Acting President Rukowicz and the Executive Director informed of everything that is going on.

Commissioner Colligan asked about the Fire Marshal's report which was missing from the Chief's report. The Chief reported that the Fire Marshal is one of the victims of COVID. He is in the hospital at the time of this meeting. The Fire Marshal also had extenuating medical issues. He has pneumonia. The Chief did not know if COVID was because of that or the exposure that he tested positive for. The Deputy Fire Marshal/Assistant Fire Chief Jason Brade has been filling in for the Fire Marshal as best he can. He was also quarantined two weeks ago for two weeks due to exposure to the Fire Marshal. Since he has been back, he has dedicated his activities to Fire Marshal operations. There is another person they are identifying to bring on board to assist on Mondays and Fridays. The Chief will be discussing further with the Executive Director. Commissioner Spotts asked that we reach out to Todd and his family to see if there is anything we can do to help or if the family needs anything. The Chief will be contacting him tomorrow or Thursday. He has emailed Todd to see what if anything he may need, but as stated he will follow up again in the next day or two. Acting President Rukowicz thanked Chief Terenzio and his staff for the outstanding and stressful job

they are doing on the front lines. He also appreciates the Chief's daily updates for him and the Executive Director. They have been helpful and informative.

A motion was made by Commissioner Terry, seconded by Commissioner Spotts and unanimously approved to accept the Chief's Report for March as presented. Commissioner Colligan abstained.

- 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 had nothing to add to his report. He asked if there were any questions. He reported that during this pandemic his staff has been doing well. No one has symptoms, and everyone is reporting to work every day. Chemicals are fully stocked. The Acting President asked Mr. Palmieri to pass on to his staff the Board's appreciation of their efforts, and that they are not unnoticed. Commissioner Colligan asked how the new Administrative Assistant was working out. Mr. Palmieri stated that things are going very well. Although it is a little difficult having her located at the Water Garage rather than West St., it is working out.

A motion was made by Commissioner Terry, seconded by Commissioner Spotts and unanimously approved to accept the Operations Report for March as submitted.

REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. District Operations. There were no meetings.
- B. Executive. They will be having their first budget meeting tomorrow, Weds., April 22, 2020, for the Water/General Fund budget. They will meet again on Thurs., April 23, 2020, for the Fire side of the budget. After the two meetings, the Executive Committee will finalize the budget and send out copies to all the Commissioners to review one week before a Special meeting is scheduled to approve the budget.
- C. Fire Operations. The last meeting was held on Tuesday, February 18, 2020. Minutes had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Vice Chairman Hinnens had nothing to add.

A motion was made by Commissioner Terry, seconded by Commissioner Spotts and approved 5 to 0 to accept the Fire Operations Committee report for February 18, 2020, as submitted.

1. Communications Subcommittee. A workshop was held on February 19, 2020, because there was no quorum for a meeting. Notes are attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Commissioner Colligan reported that the Communications project is moving forward on the District side. A meeting was held this week with Chief Terenzio, Commissioner Colligan, the Executive Director and Paul Zito, the Clerk of the Works. The numbers for the voting sites were reviewed. The only site they could not get a cost for is the Nike site. It is still in the works. They are moving forward even though Norcom is not working at this time due to the pandemic. If all the preliminary work is completed, the Clerk of the Works will push to get Cromwell's project first on Norcom's list post-pandemic. Commissioner Colligan will continue to provide updates. The final figures are still being worked on. When they are available, they will be shared with everyone. Commissioner Rukowicz thanked Commissioner Colligan for all the hard

work being put into this project. Commissioner Colligan thanked all that are involved with him on this project. He also thanked the Board and staff for their support.

D. Pension. A meeting was scheduled for March 18, 2020. It was canceled because of the virus. The next meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2020.

E. Personnel. There was a regular Personnel Committee meeting held on Feb. 27, 2020. Also held were special meetings on Feb. 6, Feb. 13 and March 2. Vice Chairman Hinners did not have much to add, but said everything has been documented, and there was some interesting reading. Copies of all the meeting minutes had been previously distributed and reviewed. Copies are attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office.

A motion was made by Commissioner Spotts, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the Personnel Committee meeting minutes of Feb. 6, 13 and 27; and March 2, 2020.

F. Water Operations. Commissioner Epstein reported that a meeting was held on February 11, 2020. Minutes had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. The next meeting is scheduled for May 12, 2020.

A motion was made by Commissioner Spotts, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the Water Operations Committee meeting minutes of February 11, 2020, at submitted.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

There were no appointments to report.

CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

A. Report of the Town Council Liaison. Ms. Donohue reported about the Town's tax deferral program being instituted to assist residents affected by COVID-19. Sewer bills will not be due until mid-July and the July tax bills will not be due until October. She also stated that the decision has already been made to cancel the Memorial Day Parade. They are still trying to find some other way to honor our fallen heroes and veterans. Commissioner Colligan made a suggestion which is being done in other towns which is to have a representation of various public service agency vehicles (Police, Fire, DPW) do a drive by around town. This has also been suggested by Christie Carpino. Ms. Donohue will pass the suggestions along. No one had any questions for Ms. Donohue.

B. Reports of the Special Committees

1. Public Safety Tower Committee. A meeting was held on March 6, 2020. Minutes had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Alvarado did not have anything additional to report. He stated they are still moving forward. There are two major projects there. One is the reinforcement project and the other is a replacement generator. The projects have lost some momentum moving forward due to COVID -19 issues. They are waiting for legal contracts from the providers for funding the reinforcement project and the generator. Commissioner Rukowicz asked about an air conditioning unit that was installed at the tower. Mr. Alvarado explained post approval at the last Tower meeting, an air

conditioning unit was installed in Room 3. It was a replacement air conditioning unit. Some heating spikes were noticed back in early to mid-February. Mr. Alvarado brought this to the attention of the Tower Committee, and they voted to replace the unit in Room 3. Currently all the air conditioning units are new at the Public Safety Tower.

A motion was made by Commissioner Spotts, seconded by Commissioner Hinners and unanimously approved to accept the Public Safety Tower Committee meeting minutes of March 6, 2020, as submitted.

2. Safety/Building Committee. A meeting was held on January 9, 2020. Minutes had been tabled from the Board of Commissioners' meeting of February 18, 2020, because there was a question of a non-voting member of the Committee making a second to a motion. It was researched by the Recording Secretary who re-listened to the meeting tape and confirmed the minutes were recorded incorrectly. A voting committee member did second a motion on a vote rather than a non-voting member. The minutes were corrected by the Recording Secretary. Copies of the corrected page had been distributed to the Commissioners.

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Spotts and unanimously approved accept the corrected Safety/Building Committee meeting minutes of January 9, 2020, as presented.

3. By-Laws Committee. A meeting was held on February 25, 2020. Minutes had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. The next meeting is scheduled for May 12, 2020. Acting President Rukowicz noted that there are a couple of items to be clarified by President Brow upon his return. Commissioner Epstein noted that there are a couple of items to be added to the next meeting agenda.

A motion was made by Commissioner Spotts, seconded by Commissioner Hinners and unanimously approved to accept the By-Laws Committee meeting minutes of February 25, 2020, as submitted.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Commissioners' Comments. Acting President Rukowicz went down the line of Commissioners alphabetically by last name to see if any Commissioners had any comments. Commissioner Colligan commented that everything they are doing to address COVID-19 issues is done with a learning curve. He thanked all the Commissioners for doing whatever they could to be helpful. Commissioner Epstein has been getting disinfectant through the Judicial Marshal's office. Commissioner Colligan acknowledged the Executive Director and his support through the extra hours and conference calls. During the COVID crisis, there have been a lot of conference call meetings, and decisions having to be made during those calls. Due to all the extra responsibilities being brought on because of the pandemic, the Chief and Assistant Chief are in constant contact with the Executive Director and Commissioners either through texts or emails even on the weekends. The staff at the Communications Center is doing a great job as well. Commissioner Colligan added that once this pandemic is behind us, there needs to be some type of committee formed to be prepared for the next time. Chief Terenzio has been preparing a notebook full of information learned from this pandemic experience.

Commissioner Epstein requested that these conference call Board meeting times be moved from 3:30 PM to 5:00 or 5:30 PM. Some Commissioners are still working, and in Commissioner Epstein's case, his work day is over at 4:00 PM. The Acting President stated that they will take his comments under consideration. Commissioner Hinnners did not have any further comments. They were addressed during the course of the meeting.

Commissioner Spotts echoed everyone else's feelings of gratitude to the Fire Chief, EMS, Fire Department and Communications Center. Everyone is doing an outstanding job. Commissioner Terry agreed with everyone's comments about everyone working together. Its amazing to see Water and Fire all working together during this pandemic. Everyone is working so hard to make everything run smoothly and making sure the community is taken care of. Commissioner Rukowicz echoed everyone's thoughts and comments. Commissioner Terry added that the District should reach out to the Fire Marshal's family to see if there is anything they need or that the District can do to help. The Fire Chief has made the offer.

- B. Budgetary Adjustments. There were no adjustments to report.
- C. Approval of Contracts/Contractors. There were no contracts or contractors to approve.
- D. Approve of Leave of Absence of the President. Acting President Rukowicz noted that the President of the Board has been on a leave of absence effective February 29, 2020. Although this leave has already started, it was not discussed by the Board. Commissioner Rukowicz has been communicating with him a couple of times a week. The President is anticipating coming back by the end of June, but depending on the outcome of the pandemic, it is not clear when this will happen. If there are any changes, Commissioner Rukowicz will advise.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hinnners, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept the Leave of Absence taken by the President effective February 29, 2020.

- E. CT Fire Chief Assoc. Membership Invoice. Commissioner Rukowicz noted that a couple of months ago the Commissioners filled out an application form. Commissioner Rukowicz suggested that this item be tabled because of expenditures the District is incurring, and revisit this at a later date. Commissioner Colligan added that the next CT Fire Chiefs' meeting was supposed to be in Cromwell, but was canceled due to COVID-19. He does not know of a reschedule date until maybe July or August. Cromwell may be hosting in October. He suggested waiting to vote on this until the next budget is approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hinnners, seconded by Commissioner Spotts and unanimously approved to table the membership invoice for the CT Fire Chiefs' Assoc. until the next budget.

- F. Ladder 3 Update/Cummins. Acting President Rukowicz asked Chief Terenzio to provide an update on this. Ladder 3 had gone in for service, came back and had to go back in. Chief Terenzio explained that approximately 6 weeks ago, there was a knock in the motor. It went back to be serviced for a third time. There was a discrepancy as to why the apparatus was given back to the Fire Department when there was still a knock in the motor. It was determined that the motor needed to be replaced. The cost which included the prior invoice with upper half motor problems was a total of approximately \$60,000. That cost was not acceptable to the District due to the unresolved issues. The apparatus was tied up at

Cummins for a while which was right around the time the pandemic was starting. A meeting was held with a representative of Cummins, the Executive Director, Chief Terenzio and Cromwell's mechanic. The motor was replaced, and the mechanic advised the Chief there are a lot of new parts on the top half of the motor as well including the turbo and intake manifold, etc. There was a little bit of a discrepancy with what was agreed for a price. However, it is running well and is back in service. He deferred to the Executive Director for the exact price.

Back in November the cost was \$17,000 for repairs that was not paid because the issues were not resolved at that time. Now they have a brand new engine with a 5 year warrantee for \$34,000 instead of \$60,000. That includes paying the \$17,000 invoice. He added they have lost faith in the Cummins engine because of all the issues they have had over the last 3 -5 years. They did get a 5 year warrantee. Commissioner Colligan asked where the funds are coming from to pay the invoice. The equipment reserve fund has some money left over from the Coles Road boiler, and a couple of other projects had some leftover funds. This repair for Ladder 3 was all unbudgeted. The District did not anticipate \$34,000 in repairs, and it was not budgeted in the last budget year. Commissioner Rukowicz thanked the Chief for his update and also thanked the Executive Director, Chief Terenzio and Chris Logan for taking part in the discussion with Cummins and working to reduce the price of an expensive repair. He thanked Commissioner Colligan for his research on the apparatus to provide some ammunition to negotiate a fair price.

- G. Discussion & Possible Decision to Defer Late Fees for 90 Days for Water Division Quarterly Bills. Acting President Rukowicz discussed the water bills that were recently sent out. The District is proposing the same payment guidelines as the Town during this pandemic. They will waive late fees on water bills for 3 months. Instead of late fees being incurred 30 days after water payments are due, late fees will not be added for 90 days after bills are due. This is the same policy that the Town is using for tax collection. It was noted that this policy was discussed at the last meeting but a vote was not taken.

A motion was made by Commissioner Spotts, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to authorize the District to waive Water Department late fees for a 90 day period.

- H. Recommendation from Executive Director Re: Moratorium on Spending. Acting President Rukowicz stated that there are two more months in the fiscal year. July will start the new fiscal year with not as much money in the budget because we are deferring Water Department late fees for a period of time in addition to the Town waiving late fees for property and vehicles. Mr. Neto further explained that based on the decisions the Board has made to defer the water tax program and late fees for 90 days, there will not be as much revenue coming in.

The Executive Director ran some numbers with Mr. Alibrio, and the upcoming budget is going to be very tight. Mr. Neto is proposing that there be no more spending unless the expenditure falls into the following categories: safety, health, security, or equipment/systems breakdown that interferes with the workplace. P-cards will be pulled back. Any purchases will need to get an approval from the Executive Director. If a division head does not agree with the Executive Director's decisions on purchasing, they may appeal to the President of the Board. This will be a way to control the cash flow for the next 5 or 6 months. Mr. Neto stated that some type of controls must be in place during this time of uncharted waters. If a situation should occur that the District does not have enough funding to meet payroll, other measures will be needed such as layoffs or furloughs. Items that will be paid are debts,

payroll and utilities. Mr. Neto believes this type of action should stay in place for the next 5 months. Acting President Rukowicz gave his comments on this situation, and reminded everyone that when the District is able to resume normal financial activities, the holidays will be right around the corner, that may impact residents either paying their bills or buying Christmas gifts.

Commissioner Colligan asked about unexpected overtime costs due to fire emergencies. Mr. Neto noted that emergencies of that nature would of course be covered. He was referring to expenditures where there is some latitude. The focus is going to be capital projects.

Mr. Alibrio reinforced what everyone has been discussing. The projection that he did has some revenue coming in, but mostly from ambulance billing, and that can't be reliable. He stressed that his projection was very close to having no money left in the bank. He suggested that if someone needs to purchase something, they should ask themselves (3 times), "do I need this to perform my job?" He added that if people have a good relationship with a vendor, and something needs to be purchased, terms should be arranged such as 90 days or 120 days. The next six months will have little revenue coming in. Regarding overtime, there will be overtime in the EMS/Fire areas. That cannot be prevented. However, what can be prevented is small increments of overtime, i.e., 15 min. before or after a shift. Regular hours should be the only thing being entered into payroll by staff. Commissioner Spotts added that given the situation with people unemployed, businesses struggling not knowing if they will survive, this is the most prudent and responsible thing that Mr. Neto and Mr. Alibrio have come up with that is the most meaningful action the Board can do. He thanked both gentlemen for their hard work.

Commissioner Terry stated we must do whatever we can to save District jobs. She does not want to see layoffs or furloughs. She does not want to see the people that are the backbone of District operations paying the price of irresponsible purchasing by others. She is in favor of the policy of asking the question 3 times. Commissioner Colligan asked Mr. Alibrio if he could show how much revenue is coming in based on the tax deferment in place. Mr. Alibrio will be able to reflect that in his financial reports.

Mr. Neto added that typically the District receives a large check monthly or every two months from the Town for their portion of tax revenue collected. Mr. Neto met with Doug Siena. He is proposing to get a steady flow of revenue coming in by having checks cut to the District weekly or biweekly. He met with Mr. Siena and the Town Manager in order to minimize the timeline between the tax payer making a payment and the payment arriving in the District's account. Commissioner Epstein asked if the District would be getting any money from the federal government. There has been a lot of talk about money from the federal government going to hospitals. He wanted to know if anything was going to first responders. If so, the District would be able to look into a grant. Mr. Neto has not heard anything about federal assistance but is always checking. He did sign up through the State through FEMA for COVID-19. He is waiting to find out when he can invoice them for expenses at the end of this month. There is a process for reimbursement. He does not want to wait 6 months to get this process going. As soon as they allow us to invoice or provide them data related to this crisis, Cromwell will submit it. Commissioner Epstein will try to find out if anyone knows of any programs for first responders. As part of the Cares Act, Mr. Alibrio noted that the District already received \$13,000. It is a grant from the Dept. of Health & Human Services. That money has already been received.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hinners, seconded by Commissioner Spotts and unanimously approved to authorize the Moratorium on Spending as stated by Mr. Neto and Mr. Alibrio.

- I. Budget Timeline & Update. The Executive Director reported that the Executive Committee will be meeting tomorrow, April 22, 2020, to discuss the Water Division and General fund budget. They will meet again on Thursday, April 23, 2020, to go over the Fire Department budget. The 20/21 Budget should be ready for the full Board's approval within a week or week and a half. The Acting President will then need to call a Special Meeting to accept or modify the budget as presented. However, at this time since there are no public meetings, the special meeting for the budget will be the final decision made by the Board either to accept or modify. Acting President Rukowicz reiterated what the Executive Director reported.
- J. Approval of Personnel Committee Recommendation for Assistant Fire Chief Position. Acting President Rukowicz asked Commissioner Hinners to report on this issue as Vice Chairman of the Personnel Committee. Commissioner Hinners reported that the Committee held lengthy phone interviews with candidates which was different. There were four very qualified candidates. The Committee narrowed their pool of four candidates down to one. The person chosen was Mr. Bill Stacy. He is a full-time Captain in the West Haven Fire Department, and had an impressive resume. Chief Terenzio added that Mr. Stacy is also a part-time scheduled individual in Cromwell. His son is also a part-time scheduled individual. He has an extensive background in managing a fire department and works with scheduling similar to Cromwell. The Committee was very satisfied with its choice. If the Board approves the Personnel Committee's recommendation, the Executive Director will communicate through the Chief's office the appointment of the candidate and advise the other three candidates of the Committee's decision. A start date will be determined after discussion with Mr. Stacey. Chief Terenzio added that he felt the Committee did a fair job in their assessment. Commissioner Spotts asked if the District can afford this position at this time with all of the budget issues going on. Mr. Neto stated that the District can afford it. This position has been open for the last six months. There is definitely a need. There is a tough budget situation that exists, however, operationally there is a dire need. The District has had to use services of a Commissioner to fill the need for this position. Commissioner Hinners added that the demand on Assistant Chief Brade has been huge with the other position being filled.

Commissioner Epstein asked if there would be an opportunity to meet Mr. Stacy. Commissioner Colligan noted that he is a part-time person for Cromwell and is working today. He could be available at the firehouse should Commissioner Epstein want to go to the firehouse. Commissioner Epstein had concerns regarding not being on the Personnel Committee and not having an opportunity to meet potential employees before he is asked to vote on them. Acting President Rukowicz added that the Board just hired two Administrative Assistants based on the recommendations of the Personnel Committee. The Board has never done that before, the By-Laws state that the Committee has the power to hire and fire. If Commissioner Epstein wants this to be changed, as Chair of the By-Laws Committee, it should be brought up at that Committee meeting.

Acting President Rukowicz asked for a vote from the Board members regarding whether or not they wished to vote on the recommendation of the Personnel Committee or postpone that vote until Board members that are not on the Personnel Committee could have an opportunity to meet the candidate. Commissioner Terry added that if this situation was a business environment, there may have been more than one interview by management with their

recommendations going forward. The business would rely on the expertise of management to do the vetting process. She felt that the way in which the hiring process was done for Mr. Stacy was the way it should have been done. Commissioner Spotts added that this is the responsibility of the Personnel Committee.

Commissioner Colligan added that after being “on the floor” serving as a temporary Assistant Fire Chief, what is needed immediately is someone that can be in the trenches with the troops. The Chief is trying to take care of the administrative end of things, Jason Brade is operating as a Fire Marshal because of the issues going on there. By filling the part-time Assistant Chief position, it allows the Chief to have more time to address his own responsibilities.

A motion was made by Commissioner Terry, seconded by Commissioner Hinnners and unanimously approved that a vote be taken at this meeting to approve the hiring of Bill Stacy as part-time Assistant Fire Chief. If the voting outcome was nay votes, the Acting President would have called for Commissioner Epstein’s suggestion to have non-Personnel Committee Board members arrange a “meet and greet” of the candidate.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hinnners, seconded by Commissioner Terry and approved 4 to 1 to hire Mr. William Stacy as part-time Assistant Fire Chief. Commissioner Epstein voted nay. Chief Terenzio will notify all the candidates at the same time.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Hinnners, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 4:53 PM.

ATTEST:

Jason Hinnners, Secretary

Nancy Deegan
Recording Secretary
5-14-20