

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 **Special Personnel Committee Meeting**

Thursday, February 13, 2020

6:00 PM

**1 West Street
Cromwell, CT**

Present: Commissioners Jason Hinners (Vice Chairman), Lee Brow (President) and Mertie Terry. Commissioner Johnathon Hamlin had an excused absence. Also attending were Executive Director Julius Neto, Fire Chief Michael Terenzio, Career Firefighter William McKnight, Part-time Firefighter Christopher Brant, Commissioners Roger Rukowicz and Robert Donohue.

- I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM, by Vice Chairman Hinners.
- II. Approval of Agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Brow, seconded by Commissioner Terry and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as submitted.
- III. Public Comment. There were no public comments to report.
- IV. New Business
 - A. Discussion and Possible Decision Regarding the Investigation of a Part-Time Firefighter. The Vice Chair gave the part-time firefighter the option to have this session in public or Executive Session. The employee stated the public session would be fine. The Executive Director began by giving some background information on the event that occurred two weeks ago. He deferred to Chief Terenzio who did an investigation of the incident. The employee, Chris Brandt, is in attendance because he was a participant in the incident.

Chief Terenzio distributed copies of the investigation report to the Committee. He received a complaint from Firefighter Boin. The incident involved PPE being used as a prop for a joke. What the Chief found interesting to note particular to Firefighter Brandt's involvement is that after receiving the complaint and beginning a review, he began by contacting the officer in charge who was Firefighter Marrotta. Career probationary firefighter Marrotta was acting in the capacity of the officer in charge that day. Without knowing who promulgated the incident, the Chief began his investigation with Firefighter Marrotta. Somehow during the Personnel Committee meeting of the 23rd, the Chief didn't notice until the end of the meeting that Firefighter Brandt had reached out to him that evening to contact him. The Chief did make contact with Firefighter Brandt the following day where Firefighter Brandt did offer up that he was the instigator as to applying the actual glitter spray to Firefighter Boin's PPE. The Chief commended him for stepping up. Firefighter Brandt's statement is in the report. The

Chief also obtained statements from all those that were on duty that day. The Chief read Firefighter Brandt's statement. Firefighter Brandt admitted that he had a lack of good judgement. He stated that he had no knowledge that this action was targeted for a known victim. He was not aware that the individual; could not handle a comical situation. He also stated that at first Firefighter Boin thought the situation was comical until something triggered him to go off into an angry tirade. Firefighter Brandt admitted to Firefighter Boin that he was the culprit and apologized. Firefighter Brandt tried to console Firefighter Boin. Firefighter Brandt believed that good intend was involved. He apologized for bad judgement but good intent. This is the investigation for Firefighter Brandt who took responsibility for the actual application of the material as was discussed with Firefighter Marrotta.

Firefighter Brandt gave his explanation of the events. He stated that he did not know the background of Firefighter Boin. He admitted that he did it and used bad judgement. He did try talking to Firefighter Boin and had him calm and laughing. But something snapped after that which caused Firefighter Boin to start getting angry again. Firefighter Brandt stated it was supposed to be a joke, but it went bad. He understands that gear is not to be tampered with. In no way, shape or form did he intend for anything to be unsafe or make the person unable to respond to a call.

Commissioner Terry asked about the drill that took place later on the rope anchoring system. She asked who was suspended off the ground in the harness besides Firefighter Boin. He explained that Firefighter Boin was the only one suspended by the rope because it was a short drill, and it was a drill he was familiar with. The training evolution was approximately ½ hour. Firefighter Brandt stated the drill had nothing to do with anyone. He explained the drill and its purpose.

The Chief asked how Firefighter Brandt selected Firefighter Boin's gear for the prank. He stated that the gear was right next to his, and that was why it was selected. The Chief also asked how Firefighter Brandt obtained the glitter spray. He responded that it was in the report. The Chief asked if he had any instruction on how to use the product. Firefighter Brandt said he did not. The Chief also asked who had advised Firefighter Brandt of the possible condition of Firefighter Boin. He stated that no one in particular did, but after he threw his keys the crew in general had a conversation about the incident. The Chief also asked Firefighter Brandt if he thought it was acceptable to use PPE or other safety equipment as props for harmless firehouse jokes. He stated he knows now that those things are not acceptable. The Chief also asked about the drill using the rope and harness. Firefighter Brandt did not have many details on the drill because he was preparing dinner and was in and out of the drill.

- V. Commissioners' Comments. There were no Commissioners' comments to report.
- VI. Public Comment. There were no public comments to report.
- VII. Executive Session
 - A. Deliberations on Personnel Matter. A motion was made by Commissioner Brow, seconded by Commissioner Terry and unanimously approved to enter into Executive Session at 6:20 PM, inviting into the session Chief Terenzio and the Executive Director. Firefighter Brandt was asked to wait for the end of Executive Session.

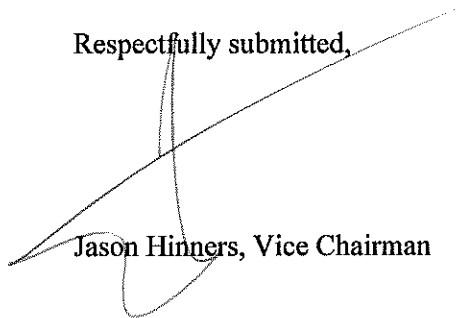
A motion was made by Commissioner Terry, seconded by Commissioner Brow and unanimously approved to adjourn Executive Session at 6:45 PM.

A motion was made by Commissioner Terry, seconded by Commissioner Brow and unanimously approved to resume the Special Personnel Committee meeting at 6:46 PM.

A motion was made by Commissioner Terry, seconded by Commissioner Brow and unanimously approved to place Part-time Firefighter Christopher Brandt on a two week unpaid suspension for violation of the District's Fire Department SOP and procedures for tampering with another Firefighter's PPE. This will be effective immediately.

VIII. Adjournment. There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Brow, seconded by Commissioner Terry and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 6:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Jason Hinnings, Vice Chairman

Nancy Deegan
Recording Secretary
2-28-20