

Cromwell Fire District

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FIRE DISTRICT OFFICE
WATER DIVISION

FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS **Water Operations Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, May 4, 2022

5:30 PM

**Coles Road Firehouse
105 Coles Road
Cromwell, CT**

Present: Commissioners Roger Rukowicz (Chairman), Charles Epstein and Robert Donohue. Also attending were Executive Director Julius Neto and Water Operations Manager Joseph Palmieri. Commissioner Mertie Terry was absent.

- I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 5:36 PM, by Chairman Rukowicz.
- II. Approval of Agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Donohue, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as presented.
- III. Public Comment. There were no public comments to report.
- IV. New Business
 - A. Water Operations Manager's Report – J. Palmieri. Mr. Palmieri distributed copies and discussed his monthly report.
 - They pumped almost 42 million gallons of water. Almost the same as last month.
 - They upgraded 50 water meters which is a lot of meters in one month.
 - There were a few service repairs that were done. The old Sewer Garage had a leak for quite some time. They had shut it off at some point, and it was turned back on. The Water Department dug it up, cut it and capped it. If there is anything that is done with that building, it will require a whole new service.
 - 693 Main Street had a full replacement of the service. The service came in through the neighboring property out to the main. There was no record on the shut off but there was a leak on the neighbor's property. They had put a new tap and main in the front yard and a new curb stop which was hooked up in April. It was abandoned in front of 691.
 - 5 Wall St. had a leak at the shut off which was fixed.
 - For fire hydrant replacement they worked on the valve and hydrant at Woodland Heights located on Shunpike Road. It was very involved. The valve and hydrant were replaced. So now the hydrant and the base at Woodland Heights have been replaced, and it is functional again.

- There was a motor vehicle accident at 425 Main St., where the pole was hit, fell over, hit the fire hydrant and cracked the water main. It required a valve replacement. The valve was 96 years old. The insurance company was billed today. The total cost of that repair was approximately \$8,000.
- Mr. Palmieri reported the well field access road has been completed. There will be a scheduled walk-through tomorrow with the contractors and the State DOT. The Executive Director and Mr. Palmieri will be attending. It has been paved, the new gate has been installed. The road was also widened. There was no cost to the District, the State took care of the work.

Commissioner Donohue asked about the vacant position in the Water Division. Mr. Palmieri did not know if there would be funding available July 1, but if so he would repost the position. There are two factors preventing someone from being hired, one is the candidate needs to have a CDL license. The other is the salary. There were not a lot of responses from the last posting. Union CDL operators are paid much more than Cromwell. They start at between \$45 and \$70 an hour. Cromwell pays \$24 an hour.

- B. Update on DEEP's Temporary Authorization for Sale of Water to Berlin. The Executive Director explained how it was discovered that the District does not have the appropriate permit to divert and sell a certain amount of water to Berlin. A temporary permit has been put in place. \$1,250 is the District's portion of the cost of the temporary permit. The charge was \$2,500 but because the District is a municipality, the charge was reduced to \$1,250. The Water Division is also working with Environmental Partners to obtain a normal/permanent permit.
- C. Discussion and Decision for District-Wide Meeting Regarding Emergency Interconnection Including Bonding. Through the budget cycle, the Water Operations Committee appropriated \$56,000 for the preliminary engineering report that gave everyone some scope of what the project would look like. There were some additional funds in this year's budget for the final engineering design which is a \$300,000 expense. The final engineering design needs to be done as a requirement of the project. The State needs to have that done, and it identifies the true expense of the project and the nuts and bolts of the project.

The District is looking for the State to provide them with low interest loans. Certain protocols are required in order to qualify for the loans. One is that the Board goes through a review process that is voted on and approved to the next level. Mr. Neto is hopeful that this will be moved forward to the full Commission for further assessment and recommendations. The reason there needs to be a recommendation from the full Board is so that they can plan to provide some public awareness because the cost will be up to \$5 million. A District-wide meeting would be appropriate to discuss the scope of the project and the bonding. He asked for the Committee's thoughts on what is needed to get the information out there. He suggested a public hearing to get the information out. The Committee needs to make it official that they are moving the project forward. It then needs to be communicated to the public.

Commissioner Epstein asked about combining the project with the tank project. They want to keep the 2 projects separate because they do not know what will be involved yet with the tank. If all these things are combined, they will not be able to move on any part of the projects for two or three years. That project should be part of the 5 year plan. There was continued discussion regarding the facts of the projects and relaying it to the

public. Two thirds of the \$300,000 for the Engineering study has been put in this budget, and one third will be in next year's budget. This was the process done with the SCATA system. The final engineering study will be completed in July 2023.

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Donohue and unanimously approved that the issue of the Interconnection Project including Bonding be brought before the full Board of Commissioners to schedule a District-wide meeting regarding the Emergency Interconnection including bonding.

- V. Commissioners' Comments. Commissioner Epstein asked about a camera at the gate at the well fields. Mr. Palmieri reported they do have a camera and are setting up other security measures such as on the road approaching the gate. They are also putting lighting in the area.
- VI. Adjournment. There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Donohue, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger Rukowicz, Chairman

Nancy Deegan
Recording Secretary