

# Cromwell Fire District

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FIRE DISTRICT OFFICE  
WATER DIVISION

FIRE DEPARTMENT  
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### Personnel Committee Meeting

Tuesday, November 8, 2022

5:30 PM

Coles Road Firehouse  
105 Coles Road  
Cromwell, CT

Present: Commissioners Robert Donohue (Chairman), John Sokolowski and Roger Rukowicz (President) attended. Also attending were Commissioners Charles Epstein and Donald Smith, Executive Director Julius Neto, Fire Chief Jason Brade and Fire Lieutenants Brett Hallden (Local 4662 President) and Bill McKnight. Commissioners Mertie Terry and David Colligan were absent.

- I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM, by Chairman Donohue.
- II. Approval of Agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Rukowicz, seconded by Commissioner Sokolowski and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as submitted.
- III. Public Comment. Lt. Hallden addressed Item IV. on the agenda. When Chief Brade took on the interim role as Fire Chief and then as Chief, he inherited some unresolved issues that he has since become aware of. Lt. Hallden offered his congratulations and support to Chief Brade and hoped the Board would continue to support the Chief going forward.
- IV. New Business
  - A. Discussion and Possible Decision on 3 Weeks of Backpay for Interim Fire Chief Brade Prior to His Promotion to Fire Chief. Mr. Neto distributed copies of a spreadsheet documenting the amount of hours and hourly rates Interim Chief Brade worked to step up and cover the Fire Chief's office after the abrupt departure of the former Fire Chief. The spreadsheet also had a breakdown of additional hours worked per week with a total of 105 hours in a 3-week time period. The total amount of compensation is to be \$901.95. A copy of the spreadsheet is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office.

*A motion was made by Commissioner Rukowicz, seconded by Commissioner Sokolowski and unanimously approved to authorize backpay to Chief Brade for the 3 weeks he served as Interim or Acting Fire Chief before being promoted to Fire Chief. The 3 weeks affected are pay periods that begin Monday, Oct. 3, 2022; Monday, Oct. 10, 2022 and Monday, Oct. 17, 2022. The total amount owed to Chief Brade is \$901.95.*

- B. Discussion and Possible Decision on the MOA with Firefighters' Union Local 4662 Re: Temporary Duty Assignments for Certain Lieutenants. The Executive Director distributed copies of a Draft MOA for review by the Committee. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District office. The Union, the Fire Chief and the Executive Director have reviewed and discussed the draft. The document supports the decision the full Board of Commissioners made requiring the staff to come up with a temporary solution to help Chief Brade in the interim while they are looking to fill the Assistant Chiefs' positions by assigning certain duties to certain Lieutenants.

There are 2 Lieutenants at this time that are willing to take on additional duties. The duties have been scaled back because there are only 2 Lieutenants participating instead of 4. They have come up with critical duties that need immediate attention. There will also be a salary adjustment based on the extra responsibilities the Lieutenants will take on. The Executive Director will support whatever decision is made by the Committee although he did say they could not mutually agree on what the salary adjustment should be.

Chairman Donohue thought that an additional \$4 per hour was a little steep. The Executive Director was in favor of \$3 per hour but was not able to agree with the Union on that point. However, there are funds to support the \$4. They know that the salary structure for firefighters is somewhat weak. Mr. Neto feels that salary increases should be a gradual process.

The MOA identified has a beginning date of November 16, 2022, and an end date of March 16, 2023 (up to a 120 day target date). The Chief, Executive Director and Union President will sit down every 45 days to evaluate how the two lieutenants are handling their new assignments. They will evaluate at the end of the 120 day period whether or not two lieutenants are needed.

President Rukowicz was in support of this MOA. He noted that originally there were 4 lieutenants that were considered for these roles. They would have received an extra \$2 an hour, but because there are now only two lieutenants, the rate will be \$4 an hour still totaling an \$8 an hour increase. The \$8 increase would be divided between the amount of lieutenants participating. He thanked Lieutenant Hallden (President, Local 4662) for his cooperation in this effort. Commissioners Sokolowski and Donohue agreed with the MOA and the rate increase.

***A motion was made by Commissioner Rukowicz, seconded by Commissioner Sokolowski and unanimously approved to accept the MOA as presented with an effective date of Nov. 16, 2022, and an end date of March 16, 2023.***

- V. Commissioners' Comments. There were no further comments except for the President who thanked everyone for making this happen. He said that the District has to move forward and this is the first step. Commissioners Sokolowski and Donohue agreed.

- VI. Adjournment. There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Sokolowski, seconded by Commissioner Rukowicz and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 5:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Deegan, Recording Secretary

Robert Donohue, Chairman

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