

Cromwell Fire District

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FIRE DISTRICT OFFICE
WATER DIVISION

FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Fire and Water Divisions

Tuesday, February 21, 2023, 6:00 PM

Coles Road Firehouse

105 Coles Road

Cromwell, CT

The Commissioners of the Cromwell Fire District held their monthly Board of Commissioners' meeting on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, at 6:00 PM, at the Coles Road Firehouse, 105 Coles Road, Cromwell, CT to discuss and act upon Fire and Water Division business.

Commissioners Roger Rukowicz (President), David Colligan, Charles Epstein, Robert McIntyre, Mertie Terry, Robert Donohue, John Sokolowski, Donald Smith and Chip Darius attended. Also attending were Executive Director Julius Neto, Water Operations Manager Joseph Palmieri, Financial Manager Michael Lupkas, Fire Chief Jason Brade, Fire Marshal Harold Holmes and Communication Center Manager Justin Loneragan.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM, by President Rukowicz. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Rukowicz.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Donohue and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as submitted with the following additions: under New Business, Item G. Discussion on Opening and Possible Modification to Chief Brade's Contract and Item XII, Executive Session: Discuss and Update with Written Legal Memorandum from Counsel Regarding Personnel Investigation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Cheryl Gagnon, 3 Lincoln St., had comments. She is the ex-wife of the late Fire Marshal Todd Gagnon, and the mother of Todd's 5 children. There were two children present at this meeting. She explained that when she moved to Cromwell with Todd, he had plans to become a firefighter. He started his fire career with the Cromwell Fire Department as a volunteer. His children and wife supported his decision to become a part of the Fire Department. They supported him answering calls at all hours of the night. They attended countless parties and functions with him. Three of his children became Grenadiers so they could march in parades with Todd. Cheryl was a founding member of the Women's Auxiliary. Todd passed away in 2020 during the height of

COVID. It was very difficult for his children. His children did not have the chance to mourn their father the same way someone would outside the realm of COVID.

Approximately one month ago, Cheryl and her children learned that a plaque had been placed outside the Fire Marshal's Office in his honor. None of Todd's children were made aware of this. She later learned that the plaque had been discussed at a Commission meeting for at least one year prior to the plaque being installed. None of Todd's 5 children were informed. They found out the plaque was installed in November 2022, because it was posted on the Fire Department facebook page. They also found a post from September 2022 where several Fire Department members, Lee Brow along with Todd's widow, went to Colorado to honor Todd at the Fallen Firefighters ceremony and Memorial Wall. Some of the quotes from the facebook posts were "honoring our brother, Todd Gagnon." Fire Department members along with Todd's widow and her daughter were on hand to help memorialize Todd. "To say the trip was surreal is an understatement, you have to attend in person. The families who attended made the event much more unforgettable." Those were quotes from facebook.

She asked why Todd's children were not informed of this event. Are his children not his family? Do they not deserve to also be allowed to honor their father at this moving event? Todd's 5 children lost many years with their father to the Cromwell Fire Department. She looked around the room and noticed that many people in the crowd had children that grew up with Todd's children. They attended school together, and functions together with other families. Not one of those individuals reached out to Todd's children. Three of Todd's children live locally, and Cheryl has worked for the Police Department for the past 25 years. It is appalling to her and as a mother heartbreaking that no one reached out to any of his children for any of these events. The purpose of Cheryl coming to this meeting today is to express her family's disappointment in this Department. This is not a brotherhood that cares for the families of their fallen firefighters. She hopes that if another fire department member were to tragically pass away that they learn from the Gagnon family's heartbreak and disappointment.

Lt. Alan Dominy, President of Local 4662, was present and announced that the Local recently had elections. He wanted to introduce the new union officers to the Commission. Greg Bannon was elected Vice President of Local 4662, Corey LaFontaine was elected Secretary of the Local and Nick Schenartz was elected Treasurer. Scott Escales was elected Chief Steward and Philip Newton Steward. They look forward to working with the Commission.

APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF
JANUARY 17, 2023

A motion was made by Commissioner Sokolowski, seconded by Commissioner Darius and approved 8 to 0 to accept the Board of Commissioners' meeting minutes of January 17, 2023, as submitted. Commissioner Donohue abstained.

APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES OF
FEBRUARY 14, 2023

A motion was made by Commissioner Donohue, seconded by Commissioner McIntyre and unanimously approved to accept the Special Board of Commissioners' Meeting minutes of February 14, 2023, as submitted.

READING OF COMMUNICATIONS & WRITTEN APPEALS TO THE BOARD

Commissioner Epstein read a letter from Rodney Bitgood, President of the Cromwell Children's Coalition, thanking the Executive Director and the President for the use of the Coles Road firehouse conference room to have their most recent meeting. They are very appreciative of all that the Fire District does for their organization and the community. A copy of the letter is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office.

Commissioner Epstein read a second correspondence from David Masse, Food Drive Coordinator for the Knights of Columbus, thanking the Executive Director for working with them to publicize and promote the Knights of Columbus Food Drive. They appreciated the use of the electronic sign to advertise it and the lawn signs at the fire houses. A copy of the letter is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office.

Commissioner Epstein read a third letter he had just received from former President of the Board Lee Brow, addressed to the Board of Commissioners. A copy of the letter is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. The letter first discussed the poor treatment the family of Ken Going (former Commissioner and Fire Department member) received by the Fire District when Mr. Going passed. It went on to discuss the same poor treatment Todd Gagnon's family received regarding a plaque that was to be installed outside of the West Street firehouse to honor Mr. Gagnon.

REPORTS OF THE STAFF

- A. Executive Director. The Executive Director's Report for January had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. He highlighted from his report that they are trying to finalize the audit. They were delayed by the Future Plan information and the analysis that was done. As a new requirement this year, the auditors are requesting a copy of all the leases associated with the Tower. There are 22 years of leases with at least a dozen different companies. We have requested assistance from Attorney Deneen and the vendors to research. The District may need a month's extension with the auditors in order to get the information they are looking for.

Mr. Neto also wanted to publicly recognize the good work of the firefighters, EMT's and Dispatchers regarding the incident on the highway involving Firefighter Bicking. Firefighter Bicking had surgery last Friday. He is doing well and recovering. Mr. Neto acknowledged Firefighters Kyle Peck, Ryan Blaney, Ryan Reynolds, Gregory Bannon, Anthony Carlson, Lt. Bill McKnight, Dispatchers Mike Alecia and David Jahn. Their level of professionalism and human kindness and compassion to the accident victims as well as our own personnel and the state trooper was exemplary. As a follow-up, Lt. Dominy went to Hartford Hospital with others to show support for Firefighter Bicking. Mr. Neto could not have been prouder of the group. He wanted to acknowledge the firefighters that were on scene as well as all the firefighters that have stepped up to help and support in the days after the incident. That support is still going on.

A motion was made by Commissioner Donohue, seconded by Commissioner Sokolowski and unanimously approved to accept the Executive Director's Report for January as submitted.

- B. Financial Report. The Financial Report for January had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. The total

collected for fire taxes is just under \$3.2 million, which is about 68% of the levy. One thing not in this report, but will be in next month's report, after the close of January, Mr. Lupkas received our January collections from the Town. They were approximately \$1.3 million which brings the percent collected up to 96 ½ %. Regarding water produced, the last 3 months are very close to the prior years' averages especially after the first 2 months of hot, dry weather last summer.

Regarding EMS calls, there were 130 calls that were billed. Receipts year to date for EMS is just under 10% higher than last year. Regarding the audit, with the accounts that are over \$1,000, there is one additional account that reached the \$1,000 threshold this month. It is roughly 76% of the 120 days. The arrears column is currently under active collection processes. There are several stages: liens, bankruptcies and attorneys. There are no accounts that Mr. Lupkas needs to warn the Board about at this time. Things seem to be going well.

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner McIntyre and unanimously approved to accept the Financial Report for January as submitted.

- C. Fire Department Chief. The Chief's Report had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. The Chief reported that there has been a 10% increase in call volume, mostly medicals. The crews have been doing a really good job dealing with the volume. The Fire Department will be receiving a donation of \$3,000 from Covenant Living. The Department plans to use the funds for equipment. Squad 1 has been received. It is parked in the bay at Coles Rd. Commissioners were encouraged to take a look at it. The Chief was happy to explain it or answer any questions about it. Mr. Logan has been retrofitting things and making shelves. The Chief's Office worked with the Union and formed a Committee so they could get input from the people that would be using the apparatus.

They are also outfitting the new ambulance which should arrive around the end of March. They were trying to get decals similar to what they already have. Car #1 is on order and should be ready in a couple of weeks. They have a meeting with the Landon for water pressure issues. They have been working with the Union on several policies. They have been working with the Assistant Chief process. They have also been working on a training plan. Lt. McKnight has been helping the Chief out significantly with that.

The Department is about to roll out their online mandatories for the year. Chief Balletto had switched platforms in July. They had to formulate a new platform. The Chief has also been working on the budget. They also have been working on an Apparatus Replacement Plan to be presented this week or next week. The Chief reiterated what the Executive Director said about the injury on the highway. He thought the crews did extremely well. The Union and the Chief have been checking in on Mr. Bicking. He is doing well. He had surgery on Friday. He is in good spirits but banged up. The Department has been very busy.

A motion was made by Commissioner Donohue, seconded by Commissioner Darius and unanimously approved to accept the Chief's Report for January as submitted.

1. Fire Marshal's Office. The Fire Marshal's Report for January had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Fire Marshal Holmes thought that last month was a record-breaking month with 286 calls in a single month. Call volume continues to go up. This month of February which is a short month is also looking to have more calls. This month there was a

structure fire which had to do with discarded ashes that did some pretty good damage to a house on Oak Ridge Drive. There was double the crew to handle that because it happened at shift change. There was a crew coming off the scene and a crew going on scene.

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner McIntyre and unanimously approved to accept the Fire Marshal's Report for January as submitted.

- D. Water Operations. The Operations Report for January had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District. Mr. Palmieri reported that he has been working on the budget with Mr. Lupkas. He has also been working on the 2022 Consumer Confidence Report. That should be completed by the end of March. Friday Mr. Palmieri took the crew for a ride to see the new truck. There was a catalytic converter theft in the dealer's parking lot, so the truck will not be delivered until they can get the catalytic converter replaced. There is a national back order on them right now. Otherwise, it would have been delivered a couple of weeks ago. They were able to get some ideas of how they would like to equip the truck. The truck is beautiful with plenty of room. Commissioner Donohue observed the Water crew at a job site across from Splash carwash putting in a new shut off valve. He said that everyone was doing something. No one was standing around. Commissioner Donohue asked that Mr. Palmieri reach out to his crew and say thank you for the good work being done.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sokolowski, seconded by Commissioner Smith and unanimously approved to accept the Water Operations Report for January as submitted.

- E. Communication Center Report. The Communication Center Report for January had been distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Mr. Lonergan submitted his preliminary budget to Mr. Lupkas. There was an address data base malfunction. Justin had to rebuild the database. He is working on continued upgrades and is working with the Chief on Squad 1 and the new Car 1. He is also involved with the ambulance and getting the radios installed and up to speed. He has a Dispatcher in training who should be ready to go in the next week or two and onboarded. The new phone system is in process. The PO's for the phone system were signed and there should be some progress within the next couple of months.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sokolowski, seconded by Commissioner Smith and unanimously approved to accept the Communication Center Report for January as submitted.

REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. District Operations. There was no meeting.
- B. Executive. There was no meeting.
- C. Fire Operations. A meeting was held on January 9, 2023. The minutes had been tabled last month. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office.

A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Smith and unanimously approved to accept the Fire Operations Committee meeting minutes of

January 9, 2023, as submitted. It was noted that the next Fire Operations Committee meeting is Monday, March 13, 2023.

1. Communications Committee. There was no meeting.
 2. Apparatus Committee. There was no meeting.
- D. Pension. A meeting was held on January 4, 2023. The minutes had been tabled last month. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office. Chairman Colligan explained that they discussed pension issues that some ex-members had been dealing with. The Committee will be scheduling a workshop to review other cases in question and develop an investigation process going forward.

A motion was made by Commissioner Donohue, seconded by Commissioner Smith and unanimously approved to accept the Pension Committee meeting minutes of January 4, 2023.

- E. Personnel. There was no meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 14, 2023.
- F. Water Operations. A meeting was held on February 1, 2023. Minutes had been previously distributed and reviewed. A copy is attached to the minutes on file in the Fire District Office.

A motion was made by Commissioner Donohue, seconded by Commissioner Smith and unanimously approved to accept the Water Operations Committee meeting minutes of February 1, 2023, as submitted.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

There were no appointments to report.

CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

- A. Report of the Town Council Liaison. There was no report.
- B. Reports of the Special Committees
1. Public Safety Tower Committee. There was no meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 3, 2023, at 10 AM, West St.
 2. Health & Safety/Building Committee. There was no meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 5, 2023.
 3. Bylaws Committee. A meeting was held on January 26, 2023. Minutes were not available for this meeting. The next meeting is being scheduled for March 1 or March 2.

A motion was made by Commissioner Donohue, seconded by Commissioner Darius and unanimously approved to table the Bylaws Committee meeting minutes of January 26, 2023, until next month.

4. Public Relations/Community Outreach Committee. Commissioner Darius reported that they published the quarterly newsletter in the January water bills. They are working on the next quarterly newsletter which will be published in April with the April water bills.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Commissioners' Comments. Commissioner Colligan stated that since members of the public were here for public comment regarding an ex-employee of the District's, and the District spent a lot of money on the plaque, he would like to revisit the issue regarding where the plaque should be mounted, and get the Firefighters' Union involved because the employee was a Union member, and maybe have a small dedication with the plaque with the family involved. The Executive Director researched meeting minutes and was only able to find documentation of this issue in a District Operations Committee meeting (1-25-22) where the plaque was agreed upon. There are no Board of Commissioners Meeting minutes associated with the whole board voting on the plaque, its source or financial requirements. The District Operations Committee which is made up of the President, Vice President and Secretary was the only governing body that addressed this issue. Mr. Neto advised that the Board can do whatever they wish with the West St. firehouse. It is the District's building and a public building. The Board determines what goes on it. There are no planning and zoning requirements, and no structural issues. It is a matter of what it is that this governing body wants to do.

There were Commissioners that were not aware of the plaque or aware of the cost. Commissioner Epstein was on the District Operations Committee at the time and stated he did not believe there was any discussion other than President Brow doing what he thought he wanted to do. There was no discussion as to what size plaque, where it was going, whether it was going to go inside or outside. There was no discussion of the cost of the plaque. Once they found out the cost of the plaque, there were a lot of people that were concerned that all that money was spent without the Commission having something to say about it. To Commissioner Epstein's knowledge, past President Brow did it all himself with his intent, and when he did not get re-elected, there was the plaque with no follow up.

President Rukowicz stated that the price of that plaque was quoted as \$1,200. The actual price was \$1,395. When Commissioner Rukowicz took over as President in October the plaque had been delivered, and no one knew anything about it. So it was decided to put it outside the Fire Marshal's Office. It was said earlier that no one can see it, but President Rukowicz pointed out that people go in and out of the Fire Marshal's Office during the day, and the elevator is right across from the Fire Marshal's Office door where the plaque is located to the right of the door. It is very noticeable inside the building. He suggested this issue be tabled until next month, and as Commissioner Colligan suggested, work with the Union to prepare some type of ceremony to give Todd proper recognition. The President asked the President of the Firefighters' Union, Lt. Alan Dominy, to work with the Board or Commissioner Colligan on this project.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sokolowski, seconded by Commissioner Smith and approved 8 to 0 to table the Todd Gagnon plaque issue until next month's meeting. Commissioner Terry abstained.

President Rukowicz stated that the Board is going to make this right. The family should have been invited to Colorado and they were not. Commissioner Darius added that a letter of

apology should be written to all of Todd's family immediately and assure them that they will be involved in his memory and this situation will be made right. Since there has been more than one issue raised about recognition, there needs to be a procedure. His position would be that anything that has to do with people should go through the Personnel Committee, and the Personnel Committee should bring it to the Board. If it involves money, the Board should have a say.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sokolowski, seconded by Commissioner Darius and unanimously approved to authorize the Board to immediately send out an apology letter to Todd's family. President Rukowicz asked the Executive Director to prepare the letter for him to sign.

- B. Budgetary Adjustments. There were no adjustments to report.
- C. Approval of Contracts/Contractors. There were no contracts or contractors to report.
- D. Discuss and Approve the Panel's Recommendations for the Two Assistant Fire Chief Positions—Operations and Training/Safety. Chief Brade reported that the process was long. The posting was left open for quite a while to get as many qualified applicants as possible. The posting was for the entire month of January. It delayed the process and made things a little more difficult, but the Chief felt it was worth it. Mission CIT did the search, a separate written test for both positions and then scoring. They gave the Chief the top three candidates for each position. They chose to have a Chief/Commission interview with each of the three candidates. In the interest of time, they did the interviews in one day. They came up with two very solid candidates for each position. The Chief was very excited about the choices. They were unanimous decisions amongst the whole panel.

For the position of Assistant Chief of Operations, applicant Richard Driscoll was chosen. It was a unanimous decision across the board. He is currently a District Chief in the City of Hartford. He has been with the Department for almost 30 years. In terms of the operations level of experience, it is hard to say he would not be qualified for the position. He is a union member in Hartford and a Chief officer for quite a while. He is also a certified Fire Marshal. He had been a volunteer in his local department since he was 16. He has officer qualifications, instructor qualifications, Hazmat technician, Rescue or confined space rope rescue, trench rescue, etc. He has many certifications and teaches outside the Department. He seemed from the interview to be a very humble and genuine person. He acknowledged the challenge of going from a crew of 70 people to a smaller crew of 7. The Chief is looking forward to bringing him on board. He feels he will be a good fit. The President also commented that he thought Mr. Driscoll was a good candidate and very qualified. He will be a welcome addition to the Department.

A motion was made by Commissioner Darius, seconded by Commissioner Terry and unanimously approved to accept the recommendation of Chief Brade and the panel to hire Mr. Richard Driscoll as Assistant Chief of Operations.

For the position of Assistant Chief of Training & Safety, applicant Carl Newbecker was chosen. Mr. Newbecker is a volunteer Chief of the Ellington Fire Department. He has been in that position for the last 20 years. He is a Physician's Assistant by trade. He is a paramedic and an EMSI instructor. Mr. Newbecker has certifications similar to past Chief Terenzio; Fire Officer IV, Instructor III, EMSI and various Safety Officer and Health & Safety Officer certifications. He has been recognized by Congress and the House of

Representatives for special recognition for his work. He was the 2020 IAFC Training Officer of the Year. Mr. Newbecker joins the Department with some serious qualifications. His passion is the fire service. He also appears to be humble and honest. Most of his career has been in a volunteer department. He is looking forward to the challenge of coming to a career department. Chief Brade feels that with the two personalities, they should get along very well together. They will compliment each other. He explained how he will be able to explain the Cromwell aspect of things. President Rukowicz added that Mr. Newbecker is very well qualified for this position. He also thought that the selection process went very well. He thanked everyone that made this selection process possible.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sokolowski, seconded by Commissioner Darius and unanimously approved to accept the recommendation of Chief Brade and the panel to hire Mr. Carl Newbecker as Assistant Chief of Training & Safety.

President Rukowicz acknowledged the fact that the District is starting to fill positions that will make a difference in it's overall operation. He noted it is going to take time to get things on track.

- E. Discussion and Possible Approval of the Extension of the Firefighter Eligibility List. Chief Brade noted that the current eligibility list is due to expire March 3. Chief Brade has had discussions with the Union to come up with a plan. Firefighter Nowik had his last day on January 20. His resignation was effective yesterday. This will create an opening on the floor. This creates either a new hire or filling the void with overtime. They are expecting at least one career firefighter to leave within the next month or so for another career department. They will need to hire on the career side in the very near future. In discussions with the Union, it was decided that the best course of action would be to extend the current list that they have. There is a provision noted right on the list that the Department could extend it for a period not to exceed one more year. The Chief noted that they are looking to extend the list until June 30 if possible because they have a vacancy now and would like to hire from the list. If they extend the list to June 30, it will meet their immediate hiring needs. The next offer would go to #10 on the list out of a 20-person list. They are 50% through the list. The next person to make an offer is #14 on the list. Those others from #11 to #13 already have jobs.

The Chief agreed with the Union to 1) Extend the list, 2) Get permission to hire for the position that is currently vacant, 3) Start the process for the next test for when the list expires which would be July 1, and they would like the test to be an internal test. They would like to take care of their own people. The Union reached out and advised there are at least 10 of the part-time staff that are interested in career positions here. The Chief felt that 10 was a good number. The Chief's Office and the Union are satisfied with the staff that we have. 4) They want to start a part-time list as well to backfill those positions.

A motion was made by Commissioner Darius, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to accept all four points of the Chief's request.

If this is all approved, Commissioner Darius would like to see planning for a second ambulance crew for nights and weekends. The Chief stated that he has in his budget proposal a seventh person 24 hrs.

- F. Discussion of Florence Adamowicz Ambulance Bill. This is a case of a 93 year-old Cromwell resident with disabilities and in poor health. She fell, and Life Alert called

Cromwell Fire. Our crew provided basic care and evaluation, but no transport. She had help with a lift assist. The patient stated that the ambulance crew was there less than 10 minutes, and she is upset that she was billed for \$228. She has been a taxpayer for over 40 years. Between Lifeline and AARP she saved over \$3,000 for insurance. She cannot afford the ambulance bill and thinks it is outrageous. She would like some financial relief.

It was noted that the Department started billing for lift assists approximately 6 months ago. This is a fairly new charge that the State came up with. It has been in effect less than one year. It was not something that was voted on or approved by the Board.

Commissioner Darius had suggested doing some more research on the circumstances, and perhaps a personal touch to explain the process to her. The State sets the rates, and it is not a Commission decision. The District has expenses that have to be covered. This person started out their complaint at Town Hall, and it was referred to the Fire District. Although Ms. Adamowicz appreciated the lift assist, it averaged out to \$22 per minute. The Executive Director also suggested some type of payment plan.

Commissioner Terry asked if there was some type of benevolent fund that people could contribute towards for situations like this. The Town has a program through the Department of Social Services. Commissioner Darius suggested that on the basis of the circumstances described by Mr. Neto and his discussions with this individual, he proposed that we forgive this bill not as precedent, but on the basis of these circumstances, and the Board convene a Committee to draft a policy so there is certain age and insurance criteria so that they can make a systematic decision in the future.

A motion was made by Commissioner Darius, seconded by Commissioner Sokolowski and unanimously approved to forgive the ambulance bill of Florence Adamowicz.

Regarding mileage on an ambulance bill, the State is now charging from mile one. At one time they were not charging for up to 20 miles. If there is a question about mileage, customers are encouraged to contact the billing company first to see if any errors were made.

- G. Discussion on Opening and Possible Modification to Chief Brade's Contract. Chief Brade noted that at the end of this month, it will be 5 months that he has been Chief. He was initially offered a 40 hour, full time position. At the Chief's request, he asked for 30 hours if possible. He appreciated the fact that the Board honored his request. He wanted to make sure he was able to make the commitment that he was signing on for. With the flexibility he was given, he could very easily do that. He posted his working hours on the app so the crews could see when he was available and when he wasn't. He was doing some evenings and found out it helped with 3rd shift which allowed him to see some of the staff that he couldn't see during the day. He was able to see some at shift change.

Hiring the two Assistant Chiefs will help to keep up with everything. However, the Chief's job is not a 30 hour job. Former Chief Balletto was putting in 50 hours even with people in the various positions to help him out. Ten of Chief Brade's hours are used to catch up on emails and phone calls. In order to have a flexible schedule, Chief Brade feels he needs to be responsive to his staff when they call. A lot of things from his office cannot wait until next shift.

He is not asking for an hourly increase. He appreciates his salary. He is not asking for any back pay. He is just looking to increase his hours to 40. This would come with a raise

because he will be paid for 40 hours instead of 30. This is all budgeted. Chief Balletto's salary is in the budget. The Chief wants to continue doing what he is doing. Commit to at least 30 hours in the office. Responding to calls and emails. He is there and available. The Chief was having his time off prorated to 30 hours. If approved to 40 hours, the Chief would like to have his time off prorated for 40 hours.

A motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to grant Chief Brade his request to change his work schedule from 30 to 40 hours a week effective immediately.

Union Vice President Greg Bannon noted that the Union is in full support of this. Chief Brade has been great to work with. He is responsive and present at calls.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lt. Bill McKnight addressed the Board. He commented on the Chief's report regarding extending the firefighter eligibility list. He would like the Commissioners to ask themselves why 14 employees have left the Fire Department in the last 12 months.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Discuss and Update with Written Legal Memorandum from Counsel Regarding Personnel Investigation. ***A motion was made by Commissioner Donohue, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to enter into Executive Session at 7:35 PM, inviting the Executive Director and Fire Chief into the session.***

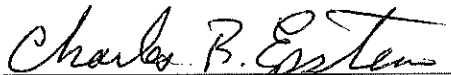
A motion was made by Commissioner Epstein, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to adjourn Executive Session at 8:06 PM, no action taken.

A motion was made by Commissioner McIntyre, seconded by Commissioner Colligan and unanimously approved to resume the regular Board of Commissioners' meeting at 8:07 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Colligan, seconded by Commissioner Epstein and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 PM.

ATTEST:


Charles R. Epstein, Secretary

Nancy Deegan
Recording Secretary