

**TOWN OF CROMWELL
TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
41 WEST STREET, CROMWELL, CT 06416
September 8, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes**

Present: Mayor E. Faienza, Deputy Mayor J. Donohue, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, A. Waters

Absent: P. Ahlquist, S. Fortenbach

Also Present: Town Manager A. Salvatore, Director of Finance M. Sylvester, Chief of Police D. Lamontagne, Captain Sifodaskalakis, Assistant Director of Public Works J. Harriman

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Faienza called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Faienza called for a moment of silence for Pat Alsup as she passed away few days ago and she was a vital part of the Town. She worked in the Cromwell High School for many years and touched many people's lives. Her husband, Ed was the Finance Director for many years.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Town Council stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by A. Waters and **seconded** by J. Donohue to approve the Town Council Regular Meeting Agenda of August 18, 2021.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, A. Waters.

Motion carried.

D. COMMISSION CHAIRMAN REPORTS/LIAISON REPORT/STAFF REPORTS

None.

E. MAYOR'S UPDATE

Mayor Faienza reported:

- Pension Committee met today. Pension is in very good health. We try to get an annual rate of return of 7.1% we got it at 7.6%. We are well over 90% funded.
- Mayor Faienza read an update for the Board of Education Chairman Jeff Matrullo. The first week of school went smoothly, students and teachers are happy to be back, positive COVID cases are still occurring, administration is keeping a close eye on it and continuing to communicate with Sal Nesci. They are interviewing candidates for the open Assistant Principal position. They

expect to have their first budget update with more detail updates to come as BOE is meeting next week. They will have more information after their October meeting.

- Crime occurring throughout the district and state. Mayor Marotta in Rocky Hill is trying to spearhead a petition to get the legislation back in session for a special session to try to address this issue.
- 20th year 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony is this Saturday at Frisbie Landing. He encouraged the public to attend.
- This summer has been rough as far as rain. Most recently, Storm Ida brought a lot of rain, the Town has been doing what we can to help.
- Café Fiore's Grand Opening was last week. He wishes them the best of luck.
- The Landing Apartments Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting will be on 10/21 at 3 p.m.
- The 2nd Annual Scarecrow Swap will be from 10/2 - 10/30, hosted by the CCD.
- Memorial Day Car Show was great, there was a great turn out.
- He attended the last Farmers Market last Friday.
- The list of volunteers willing to serve on Charter Revision is coming along.
- He will be at Covenant Living on Monday and is looking forward to hearing their thoughts, comments, and ideas.

F. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Salvatore reported:

- Cromwell Landing is complete. The light is installed over the fishing pier. The grills are on back order but grills will eventually be installed so residents can use them.
- At this time, the Transfer Station will not be accepting oil, as we received contaminated oil containing PCP. The State is advising we take preliminary tests for all oil received. DEEP is inspecting the Transfer Station tomorrow. We are exploring all avenues.
- Town of Cromwell is a member of COG and we are able to have COG do an annual Hazardous Waste pick up which will be an avenue for residents to dispose of their hazardous waste including oil.
- The flooding this summer has been terrible and the Town has been doing what we can to mitigate the flooding issues. Fortunately, Cromwell has been aggressive with tree cutting along power lines, this has paid off as we have not had a significant loss of power during these storms.
- We are continuing to work on the American Rescue Plan Act so we can finalize a list of suggestions to bring to the Council.
- Job Description project is almost complete. We plan to have it to the Council by the October meeting.
- He is disappointed with the State of Connecticut as we have not yet heard anything from the State or Department of Transportation regarding the Exit 19 Southbound ramp, and the railroad tracks over by the 13th and how they plan to address those two situations.

- A meeting was held regarding the three buildings the Town is looking at and we are finalizing the report.
- He signed contracts with the contractors doing the wall and the sidewalk projects.
- He updated the Council on the costs incurred for grievances per bargaining unit.
- The grievance regarding the Transfer Station and the grievance regarding the take home vehicle, were both withdrawn by the union after mediation.

G. FINANCIAL/FINANCE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

1. Budget Report

Finance Director Marianne Sylvester submitted a written report and presented it to the Town Council.

2. Tax Refunds

Motion made by **A. Waters** and seconded by **J. Henahan** to approve tax refunds 1-37.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, J. Demetriades, J. Henahan, A. Waters.
Motion carried.

3. Memo from Town Manager regarding Premium Pay

Town Manager Salvatore presented his memo to the Town Council and explained his thoughts behind it. He stated that the Town's employees are their greatest asset. Town employees came to work during the entire pandemic. The reason they chose the required timeframe of March 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021 to be eligible to receive the premium pay is because that was the time period when a vaccine was not available.

Motion made by J. Donohue and **seconded** A. Waters to approve the \$165,000 appropriation for the premium pay for Town Employees including the Fire District, and Water Division as outlined in the memo dated September 1, 2021 by Town Manager Salvatore.

Discussion: Councilman Demetriades abstained and recused himself from further conversation on the advice of his employer as they represent the Cromwell Firefighters and this could be seen as a direct benefit to the members of that bargaining unit. He also did not want to influence or undermine the allocation of the funds. He added that he is happy to see this type of action being taken.

Councilwoman Donohue thanked Finance Director Sylvester and Town Manager Salvatore for taking the first action and making the employees a priority.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, J. Henahan, A. Waters.
Abstentions: J. Demetriades
Motion carried.

H. CHIEF OF POLICE'S UPDATE

Police Chief LaMontagne submitted a written report and read it to the Town Council. She provided the Council with the K-9 Activity Report for the month of August attached hereto. In addition to her report, she informed the Council:

- Officer Alicea gave her notice of resignation. Today was her last day of work, she is moving out of State and wished her the best. In the next couple of weeks, they will have interviews scheduled with entry level applicants to fill Officer Alicea's position.
- On Saturday, September 11th, ACO Cheryl Gagnon is receiving the Cat Tales 2021 Advocate for Animals Award being held at the Aqua Turf. Chief Lamontagne added that she does incredible work for the Town and is extremely deserving of the award.

Mayor Faienza expressed gratitude to Officer Alicea and ACO Cheryl Gagnon on behalf of the Town Council.

I. PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Assistant Public Works Director Jon Harriman was present and reported:

- The crew has been doing their routine summer work with some interruptions from the rain storms.
- Drainage Improvements on Geer Street have been completed in advance of the sidewalk project.
- They have been preparing for the paving projects this fall. They are looking to improve drainage on some of the roads to be paved. However, there is a worldwide shortage on resin used to make pipes, therefore, getting drainage pipe is nearly impossible right now. They are limited on what they can do but are doing the best they can.
- Signed a contract with the company doing the sidewalks, they have started the "call before you dig" process and removing some trees on Main Street. It will start any day now and they plan to complete it quickly.
- A contractor is coming in tomorrow that specializes in building envelope issues to evaluate and correct the two issues we have in Town Hall.
- The roofing contractor for the town hall roof has been selected, we are waiting on materials.
- The retaining wall project is beginning soon, we have received submittals and permits for encroachments on the State Right-of-Way.
- He compiled an informal list requesting funding through the ARPA funds to conduct some studies for the areas of flooding concerns. These funds will be to hire design firms to look at these areas to come up with some ideas, suggestions and costs of what it will take to resolve them.
- Stormwater is getting into the sanitary sewer system and there are number of houses on the Evergreen Road area where the sanitary sewer was overwhelmed and water flooded into some finished basements. Cardinal Engineering has been contracted to begin the study to analyze the pipes to determine the problem and how to resolve it. This will be a lengthy process.

- Shadow Lane has a major drainage issue. The Town, the owner of the property, and the State all own parts of the undersized culvert. All three parties will need to come together to alleviate this issue.
- Coles and Cedar Drive Issue – We did come up with temporary solution to route some drainage through the neighbor's yard, however the pipe is hard to get and is 16 weeks out. This area also requires a large study.
- We opened bids for the repairs to the gutters and the installation of a snow retention system.
- We had mediation and did not come to a resolution so that will continue through the next steps.

Town Manager Salvatore informed the Council that Mr. Harriman is doing an outstanding job as Acting Director of Public Works. He added, we have had a lot happen since Mr. Spina has been out but Mr. Harriman has been doing a great job handling it all. Mayor Faienza agreed with Town Manager Salvatore and thanked Jon Harriman for stepping up and for doing an outstanding job.

J. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Aigne Goldsby, 16 Cedar Land Court joined by **Elsie Newcomb of 6 Holly Hill Drive**, informed the Council that they are Co-Chairs of Cromwell's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. They were in attendance to talk about community conversations coming up. They are launching the "Cromwell Considers Community Conversation" series. Their kick off event will be on September 26th at Pierson Park Pavilion. The first set of conversations will begin October 20th. These conversations are going to be guided group dialogues through a discussion guide they have been developing for about 9 months. The dialogues are two-hour sessions for the community to come together and talk about things they appreciate, and things they would like to happen in the future, so that they can generate action plans and bring them to the Council to help shape the future of Cromwell. They are hopeful this will be a productive avenue for Cromwell to move forward. They encouraged everyone to get involved and said that all voices are welcome.

Allan Spotts, 62 Blackhaw Drive, was in attendance as Commissioner for the Fire District. He thanked the Council and the Town Manager for the premium pay of \$1,000 for the full-time and \$500 for the part-time firefighters. The Fire Department was in difficult times with COVID cases during all that occurred during March 2020 to March 2021. He felt that it is a great recognition of their efforts and he will bring the information back to the Fire Commission at their next meeting.

K. NEW BUSINESS

None.

L. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. August 18, 2021 Special Meeting Minutes

Motion made by J. Donohue and seconded by J. Demetriades to approve the August 18, 2021 Special Meeting Minutes.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, A. Waters.
Motion carried.

2. August 18, 2021 Special Meeting Minutes (meeting beginning at 7:14 p.m.)

Motion made by J. Donohue and seconded by J. Demetriades to approve the August 18, 2021 Special Meeting Minutes (meeting called to order at 7:14 p.m.).

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, A. Waters.
Motion carried.

3. August 26, 2021 Special Meeting/Public Hearing

Motion made by J. Donohue and seconded by A. Waters to approve the August 26, 2021 Special Meeting/Public Hearing Minutes.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, A. Waters.
Motion carried.

M. RESIGNATIONS

1. Senior Services Commission
a. Shirley Banick

Motion made by A. Waters and seconded by J. Demetriades to accept the resignation of Shirley Banick from the Senior Services Commission with regrets.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, A. Waters.
Motion carried.

Discussion: Councilwoman Donohue expressed she was sad to hear of her resignation. Mayor Faienza added that she has been involved in the town for many years; she was Chairman of BOE, served on last Charter Revision, and was always helping the community. Mayor Faienza wished her the best and thanked her for her years of service.

N. APPOINTMENTS

1. Conservation Commission
a. Stacy Dabrowski

Motion made by J. Donohue and seconded by J. Henehan to appoint Stacy Dabrowski to the Conservation Commission as a regular member for a term expiring January 1, 2025.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, A. Waters.
Motion carried.

2. Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency
a. Stacy Dabrowski

Motion made by A. Waters and **seconded** by J. Henehan to appoint Stacy Dabrowski to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency as an alternate member for a term expiring December 1, 2025.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, A. Waters.
Motion carried.

O. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- Councilman Demetriades thanked Town Staff for assisting with the CCD Block Party. The event went well even though the hurricane the next day dampened their attendance a bit. He thanked the Public Works Department and Town Manager for allowing the CCD to use the sewer garage as temporary storage.
- The CCD is excited and looking forward to the Scarecrow Swap.
- They are collaborating with the Historical Society for the audio tour. The script is complete and they will be moving into the recording phase. They are excited to feature the 18 houses on Main street for that event.
- They are preparing for the holiday decorating contest in the winter.
- Project Grad is doing their fundraiser, if anyone wants to buy pies, talk to Councilman Fortenbach.

P. ADJOURN

Motion made by J. Donohue and **seconded** by J. Henehan to adjourn.

In favor: E. Faienza, J. Donohue, J. Demetriades, J. Henehan, A. Waters.
Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Amanda Calve
Secretary



CROMWELL POLICE DEPARTMENT

Denise Lamontagne
Chief of Police

TO: Chief Denise Lamontagne

FROM: K-9 Officer John Carlson

SUBJECT: Monthly K-9 Activity August 2021

DATE: 09/05/2021

Beginning August 1, 2021 through August 31, 2021 I am reporting the following activities for the K-9 unit:

August 10, 2021 – K-9 patrol monthly in-service at Veterans Home – 8 Hours

August 17, 2021 – K9 narcotics quarterly in-service – 8 Hours.

August 18, 2021 – K9 narcotics quarterly in-service – 8 Hours.

August 19, 2021 – K9 narcotics quarterly in-service – 8 Hours.

August 21, 2021 – K9 challenge for Dream Ride event at Farmington Polo Grounds.

August 22, 2021 – Case #21-9535 – K9 track for suspects who possibly fled from burglary – Negative results.

August 22, 2021 – Case #21-9536 – K9 building search for hotel burglary in progress – Bane successfully located room suspects had been hiding in – Cell phone and other evidence located inside room.

August 23, 2021 – Case #21-9562 – K9 building search for car wash burglary – Building cleared with negative results.

August 29, 2021 – Case #21-9780 – K9 assist with large group of people fighting outside of Chicago Sam's
– Fight separated and people dispersed without incident.

Nothing further at this time.