



**Marion County  
Fire Rescue Emergency Services Advisory  
Board Meeting  
August 11, 2009**

I. **CALL TO ORDER** – 4:02 by Chairman Pat Gabriel. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

II. **Members Present:**

Patricia Gabriel, Chairperson  
Paul Clark, COO Munroe Regional Medical Center  
H. Rex Etheredge, CEO Ocala Regional Medical Center  
Thomas Lorio  
Dr. Frank Fraunfelter, Medical Director, MCFR EMS  
Bill Glass

**Members Absent:**

Dr. Karen Gold (out of town business)  
Chief Dan Gentry – City of Ocala Fire Chief (City Budget hearings)  
Attendance taken by Anna Carpenter

**Others in Attendance:**

Commissioner Barbara Fitos	Chief Stuart McElhaney	Dep. Chief Dan Azzariti
Chief Shari Hall	Chief Rich Maxwell	Chief David Cooper
Dr. Lee Niblock	Karl Oltz	Jeannie Rickman
Cindy Marihugh	Peveeta Persaud	Lisa Walsh

- ❖ The Fire Rescue Emergency Services Advisory Board members and Chief McElhaney extend a warm welcome to Mr. Bill Glass. He is the new appointee by Commissioner Mike Amsden replacing Sam McConnell.

III. **MINUTES**

Minutes from the July 14th meeting were approved. Motion made to approve Minutes by Rex Etheredge, seconded by Paul Clark; approved unanimously.

IV. **BILLING**

MCFR collection rate on Medicaid bills is 67%; have been allowed to bill back to April 28, 2009. Bill Glass asked about procedure for collecting on nonpayment accounts. Letters are sent at 30, 60 and 90 days. Shari Hall: “We are very aggressive in setting up pay plans.” Mr. Glass asked why we do not put liens on property. Chief McElhaney said there are only so many legal recourses. MCFR staff is compiling a list of all the options for collection to be submitted to the Board of Commissioners. The Commissioners will then make a decision on which avenues to take.

## **V. MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

When original plan was done, the taking over of ambulance service for the County was not anticipated. With integration of ambulance service, the original master plan is now obsolete. A new master plan is being developed with Board input for presentation to the Commissioners in December and tentative adoption of final plan in January. Fiscal year 2009-2010 will be a base year with plan beginning in 2011.

Chief McElhaney read directions to Fire Advisory Board members in the Resolution, "...study and make recommendations concerning issues surrounding level of service to all areas of Marion County whether rural, suburban or urban." This Board will also define the service areas (urban, rural, etc.) Additionally, they are charged to participate in development of, and annual review of, a long-range master plan and budget necessary to execute that master plan."

## **VI. RESPONSE TIMES**

Chief McElhaney explained that there are 2 factors in determining response standards. (1) Defining an area; (2) What is your goal in terms of getting to that area. There are also 2 types of Fire Departments; 1710-Career Department, 1720-Volunteer Department.

A map of Estimated 2009 Population Density by Sections was distributed. The Census Bureau defines 'rural' as anything less than 500 people per square mile. The Commission for Fire Department Accreditation defines 'rural' as 100 people per square mile or less. Considered best to go with the Census standards; it is unrealistic for Marion County to adopt an urban standard because of the geographic range of our county. Currently the only urban standard area would be the City of Ocala. Another benefit of using Census standards is that we can then tie into all the census information. Current standard for our county is 2.32 persons per family.

MCFR uses 8.59 minutes as an informal standard response time. The Fitch report defines suburban response time as 12.59 minutes; rural as 19.59 minutes. Per Dr. Frohnfelter, the goal is to have the patient off the scene within 18 minutes. He also stated that 30% of emergencies go to Ocala Regional, 50% go to Munroe and the rest are dispersed among the other hospitals.

## **VII. STAFFING / LOGISTICS / BUILDING UPDATES**

Chief McElhaney: "We are getting ready to bring 2 new stations on line. With just the resources we have today, we are going to continue to improve our response times. Ten more new firefighters will graduate Friday; fifteen more six months down the road. You have all seen where we are now and what is going on in the community. Do you feel comfortable leveling off and remaining flat for the next three years? We are **under** what was projected at the beginning of the 10 Year Plan ... live within our means for the next three years."

Chief Azzariti: "Over the next few meetings we will demonstrate to you the need for those fifteen people who are out there in limbo." However, MCFR will not look at filling them

right now; possibly next calendar year. Chief McElhaney: "If the economy worsens, we will just have to live within our means. The Board has said they don't want to hear about hiring in the next six months."

The present Logistics facility in Silver Springs Shores has been identified as a perfect place for the new Silver Springs Library. Reviewed available properties to move Logistics operation. Found two buildings in the Anthony Industrial Park owned by the County but not being used. Projected cost of renovation for both buildings is \$375,000. Will enable Logistics to be consolidated into one location.

Bill Glass asked about the process of getting this estimate. The County Facilities personnel look at the property and submit an estimate of what it will take to refurbish. Stuart suggested that Mr. Glass meet with Andy Race, Facilities Director, so that he could review the process with Mr. Glass.

Breaking ground on one more station (in Belleview) next week. Chief McElhaney distributed a list of construction costs for various stations. Board discussed construction costs. Mr. Glass wanted to know why there was such a discrepancy in costs to build the same station. Chief McElhaney explained that varying topographies, water retention issues, account for most of the cost differential. Mr. Glass stated that, in light of the current economy, he will review construction costs to see if the cost can be reduced.

Note: Both Alachua and Lake County recently built stations with almost same square footage at twice the cost.

**VIII. CLOSING COMMENTS:**

- Line Firefighters union contract was just approved.
- There will be a new hire Swearing In ceremony this Friday at 3:00 PM.
- Groundbreaking for Station 31 in Belleview on August 20<sup>th</sup> @ 11941 SE 55<sup>th</sup> Avenue Road
- Ribbon cutting on September 22<sup>nd</sup> --- Ray Lloyd, Jr. Station 31 @ 11240 SW Hwy 484

**Pat Gabriel adjourned the meeting at 5:46.  
Next meeting will be held September 8, 2009 at 4 PM in Fire Headquarters.**

Minutes submitted by Anna Carpenter.

Approved:

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Pat Gabriel, Chairman

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Date