



**Marion County  
Fire Rescue Emergency Services Advisory  
Board Meeting  
October 13, 2009**

I. **CALL TO ORDER** – 4:00 by Chairman Pat Gabriel. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance by Paul Clark.

II. **Members Present:**

Paul Clark, COO Munroe Regional Medical Center  
H. Rex Etheredge, CEO Ocala Regional Medical Center  
Dr. Frank Fraunfelder, Medical Director, MCFR EMS  
Patricia Gabriel, Chairperson  
Dr. Karen Gold  
**Guest Speaker:** Lew Simon

**Members Absent:**

Chief Dan Gentry, City of Ocala Fire Chief (*excused*)  
Bill Glass  
Thomas Lorio (*excused*)  
Attendance taken by Anna Carpenter

**Others in Attendance:**

Commissioner Barbara Fitos	Chief Stuart McElhaney	Dr. Lee Niblock
Chief Shari Hall	Chief Rich Maxwell	Chief David Cooper
Chief Paul Nevels	Karl Oltz	Cindy Marihugh
Peveeta Persaud	Dep. Chief Dan Azzariti (arrived later)	

III. **MINUTES**

Minutes from the September 8th meeting were approved.

IV. **AED COMMUNITY PROGRAM – (Automatic External Defibrillator)**

Lew Simon presented information on the AED program being implemented in local neighborhoods; gave short background of the program.

His interest in this program began when his father had a heart attack; received AED and lived 4 ½ more years. Mr. Simon came up with the idea to have AEDs readily available and lay persons trained in their use. When he moved to Longboat Key, he wanted to implement his plan, but it was cost prohibitive at that time. Once the cost of a unit dropped below \$3,000, he persuaded his Homeowners Board to purchase one. They now have 128 units on Longboat Key.

The next logical step was to develop a system to alert nearby residents of a cardiac emergency. Those closest could respond with the AED before emergency personnel were able to arrive at the scene. He has been working with Karl Oltz, 9-1-1 Management, and they have developed an alert system using beepers.

Mr. Simon lives in The Villages on a circle with 58 homes. Two AED units have been purchased by the residents of the circle. They are located in central locations in lock-boxes. Beepers have been distributed to those residents who have been trained in the use of the AEDs. Anytime a 9-1-1 call comes into Dispatch for a cardiac arrest on their circle, there is an icon the dispatcher can click which alerts all the beepers in that area.

In November of last year at 6:21 in the morning, Mr. Simon's beeper went off. His next door neighbor was in cardiac arrest. They were doing CPR on him in less than a minute while another neighbor got the AED. The man was dead for 10 minutes. On the 4<sup>th</sup> shock, they got a pulse. The patient ended up having a triple by-pass and was home in 11 days. His doctors said that by doing CPR so early in his crisis, it kept blood flowing to his brain thereby avoiding brain damage. He made a full recovery. Mr. Simon showed a Fox news clip of the TV interview relating this story. His mantra is, "CPR buys time; AED buys life."

Captain Joel Matthias reported that shortly after getting the Villages going on this program, Mr. Simon received a call from a woman in Stonecrest, Martha Mitchell. They have begun the program there. Last month there was a cardiac call in that neighborhood. When the emergency unit arrived, there were 9 people working on the patient; they had begun CPR within 2 minutes. Programs are now being implemented and/or considered in Spruce Creek South and On Top of the World; several churches in town are working on similar programs.

Paul Clark asked the price of a unit; \$2,100 each. But there is a State rate available of \$1,450. WalMart writes grants for their purchase. Pagers can be obtained for \$4.50 per month per unit. The number of units necessary is neighborhood-driven.

Dr. Frohnfelter stated that the biggest step is training the person in CPR; once trained, they are an asset whether at home or out. Discussion was held on how to get this idea out to the public. Mr. Simon is willing to meet with any groups, large or small.

## **V. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT DISCUSSION**

Chief McElhaney distributed copies a PowerPoint presentation giving an overview of MCFR's activity over the past year. Data depicted is from October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009. Brief synopsis:

Fire Runs – 15,608  
EMS Runs – 42,433  
Ambulance Runs – 43,926  
Patient Transports – 38,858  
Total Transport Revenue Budgeted - \$12,165,381  
Total Transport Revenue Received - \$12,290,117

Per Chief McElhaney, almost 75% of calls responded to are EMS calls; 15% of those are trauma; 15% are cardiac symptoms. "We have met or exceeded what EMSA did in response times, possibly because we have more ambulances on the road. We have done it for roughly \$2,000,000 less than EMSA's cost their last year."

Dr. Frohnfelter stated that Marion County has three times the state and national cardiac survival rate. "The goal is to increase that." Benchmark is set by the American Academy of Emergency Medical Physicians.

Revenues: It was estimated that MCFR would generate revenue of \$12.17 million this year. Actually received \$12.29 million as of September 30<sup>th</sup>; \$1.1 million is the monthly expectation.

Dr. Niblock brought up fact that most common reason for denial of claims by insurance companies is whether the procedure was "medically necessary." He asked if the billing was dropped after being declined by insurance carrier. Chief Hall replied that the charges were not dropped. "We work with the person to resubmit their bill." The appeal must be filed by the patient as it is an agreement between the patient and their insurance carrier.

MCFR is beginning to see their first instances of clients being 12 months in arrears. Fire/Rescue must determine policy; are they going to carry forward the bad debt each year or write it off. EMSA wrote off almost \$6 million. We do not currently have a policy on writing off debt. However, no interest is allowed to be imposed on the bill. Based on all research done to date, no agency in the state of Florida will apply a lien to a property to collect a transport debt.

Bills are going to be reconfigured to better explain the charges. More explanatory information will be available on the website. Within next couple weeks, MCFR will be using a new billing company. Previous company was not very responsive and was expensive. New agreement will be an auto-renewal process; requires 30 days written notice to terminate.

Chief McElhaney stated that MCFR is budgeting very conservatively due to unstable economy. "But I feel pretty confident that next year we can collect what we did this year." Chief Hall explained they are trying all different avenues to work with clients for compensation of bills. They are trying alternate scheduling in the billing department so that staff members are able to reach clients when they are home; has proven successful.

Chief McElhaney: "The Master Plan is coming along very well." Will have more detail at future meetings.

**Pat Gabriel adjourned the meeting at 5:36.**

**Next meeting will be held November 9, 2009 at 4 PM in Fire Headquarters. Ms. Gabriel will be out of town; meeting will be chaired by Rex Etheredge.**

Minutes submitted by Anna Carpenter.

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pat Gabriel, Chairman

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Date

**UPDATE:**

**\*\*\*\*\*THE NOV. 9<sup>TH</sup> MEETING WAS CANCELLED. THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON DECEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup> AT 4 P.M.\*\*\*\*\***