



Marion County
Fire Rescue Emergency Services Advisory
Board Meeting
September 8, 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
Dr. Frank Fraunfelter, Medical Director, MCFR EMS
Patricia Gabriel, Chairperson
Chief Dan Gentry, City of Ocala Fire Chief
Bill Glass
Dr. Karen Gold

Members Absent:

H. Rex Etheredge, CEO Ocala Regional Medical Center (*excused*)
Thomas Lorio (*excused*)
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
Chief Paul Nevels	Andy Race	Karl Oltz
Cindy Marihugh	Peveeta Persaud	Lisa Walsh

III. **MINUTES**

Minutes from the August 11th meeting were approved unanimously.

IV. **BUILDING COSTS**

Andy Race was present to address the issue of fluctuating building costs raised by Bill Glass at the previous meeting. Mr. Glass stated that he had already met with Andy and felt that there was no need to further review this issue. He suggested that Mr. Race be excused, if no other board member had questions for him; Mr. Race left.

V. **MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

The meeting of December 8th will be a final review of the Master Plan. This will subsequently be presented to the Commissioners at a workshop. Any info/input from the Commissioners will be included in the plan. The final version is to be adopted by the Board at either the January 19th Commission meeting or second meeting in February. It will be adopted and in place before Fiscal Year 2010/2011.

VI. RESPONSE TIMES

Chief McElhaney displayed a chart showing response times for 2007/2008. (Chart showed Fire/Rescue only; did not include ambulance response times). MCFR met the standard about 12.5% of the time. Response time begins when Dispatch alerts a unit of a call. First minute (when unit is 'toned out') is "out of shoot" time and is counted toward total response time.

Chief McElhaney and Bill Glass had lengthy discussion of what actually comprises response time, how it is calculated and why it is the accepted procedure.

VII. STANDBY EVENTS

Marion County Fire Rescue has a contract with the Marion County School Board to supply ambulance staff at football games. Additionally, they supply medical staffing for festivals such as Marion County Day and other large gatherings. To date, there has been a lack of consistency regarding charges for these events.

Chief Gentry asked if the fee is based on actual cost, or is it a discount to the school board. Chief Azzariti explained that the actual cost to supply ambulance support was determined; that is the amount charged. There are no arrangements in place with any other organizations. Paul Clark pointed out that the school board is not required to supply this support; they feel it is important to do so.

As a general rule, Marion County Day and McIntosh Festival are not charged. Question was raised if all venues should pay. Pat Gabriel asked how EMSA handled this issue. Chief Hall responded that they were charged only if a unit was "committed" to the event. If a unit is not "committed" to remain at the event (taking it off the road), then there is no charge.

Paul Clark asked how law enforcement agencies handled this. Chief Nevels said that they generally do not charge for a police presence. However, Bill Glass stated that last year the McIntosh Festival was charged. Paul Clark asked what real dollar amount is involved. Chief Nevels said that they charge \$150 per truck per hour for committed units.

For some events, insurance requires ambulance presence. Perhaps use that as a trigger to determine whether a charge should be imposed or not. If a group requests a committed unit be present, then they would be charged. Board members agreed this was an acceptable practice.

VIII. BILLING FAQs:

Chief Hall reported that several billing issues have arisen recently. As an example, one woman has written to the Commissioners and news media complaining that she has been charged for an ambulance ride above what her insurance paid. Chief Hall suggested that the public needs to be educated on ambulance billing procedures. Possible ways to enact this 'education' were discussed; hand out fliers, public service announcements, etc. It was felt that newspaper ads were not the best media as only 15 to 16% of the public reads the paper.

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Training the Billing staff to deal with complaints and putting an insert into the bill itself were thought to be the most productive methods. However, if we generate an insert, the billing company will charge an insertion fee. Paul Clark suggested revamping the bill itself to explain what the specific charges covered. Dr. Gold said she had great success in her private practice with this method; putting an explanation of costs directly onto the bill. The Board consensus was that some sort of explanation is necessary. Chief Hall will investigate further.

Mr. Glass suggested placing liens on the homes of those who do not pay. Chief McElhaney will meet with the legal department to determine legality.

IX. UNION EMAILS:

Mr. Glass raised the issue of the emails which were sent to Chief Gentry and Sam McConnell from the President and members of the IAFF Local 3169. He expressed the opinion that these emails were meant to intimidate the two Board members and had precipitated the resignation of Mr. McConnell. He requested copies of any other emails (pertaining to the same subject) which were sent between the senders and other MCFR personnel. He also suggested that Rob Graff, Union President, be requested to attend the next Fire Advisory Board meeting.

Chief Gentry stated that he had responded publicly to the emails at the June 30th meeting. They were brought to the attention of Fire Dept. management and all present at that meeting. He considered it a closed matter. Although the other Board members agreed that the emails did not show the proper respect to Chief Gentry and Mr. McConnell as members of this Advisory Board, none felt that it was within the purview of the Board to control the actions of the union or its members. A vote was taken and the issue was closed.

Pat Gabriel adjourned the meeting at 5:31.

Next meeting will be held October 13, 2009 at 4 PM in Fire Headquarters.

Minutes submitted by Anna Carpenter.

Approved:


Pat Gabriel, Chairman


Date