



3/4/2022 12:13 PM

2022

**Robert McGilloway**  
**Fire Chief**

**Feb Meeting Minutes**

The Useppa Island Fire Board Meeting came to order at 9:35 on February 11, 2022. Board members present in person or by Zoom were President Peter Bennett, Suzy Trino, Treasurer, Heath Wilder, George Preckwinkle, Annie Hyder, Donald Beckstead and Karen Connery-Albert, secretary. Other Useppa residents attending were Mark Smith, Mary McColgan, John Tinney and Ginny Amsler.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Peter Bennett  
President

Board members had received the minutes of both the previous board meeting of 12-17-21 and the Annual General Meeting from December 31, 2021. Suzy moved to approve both sets of minutes. Annie seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Vacant  
Vice President

The Treasurer's Report which was dated 2-9-22 and sent to all board members was reviewed by Suzy Trino. The balance [REDACTED]. She reported expenses of \$ [REDACTED] and approximately [REDACTED] workers we hired during the final quarter. The remaining balance was \$596,192.55 because we were infused with the county contribution [REDACTED] during this period. There were no questions.

Suzy Trino  
Treasurer

President's Report: Peter stated that the focus of the meeting would be Chief Rob McGilloway's presentation. Our new Chief will discuss findings from his first 40 days on the job. After learning what he has discovered and assessed, we can determine how to resolve the concerns of residents, clarify our expectations and define our roles and that of the fire department. Rob will address the issue of BLS and ALS service, how to maintain the proper amount of manpower, and how to strengthen the relationships between the Board, the Fire Chief and the Island management and residents. The Board and Chief see we have some exciting opportunities ahead.

Karen Connery  
Secretary

Gala Progress Report: Annie apprised every one of the progress of the Gala Committee composed of herself, Karen Connery-Albert and Suzy Trino. The date of the gala is April 2, 2022. We have a number of volunteers willing to help with enlisting donors for the silent and live auctions, monetary donations, decorating and planning. We are working closely with Maggie McCormick, Useppa's event planner.

Donald Beckstead  
Island Management

We are counting on Chief Rob's report to help us craft a mission statement and theme for the fundraising. We will have about 10 live auction items and an unlimited number of silent auction items. We are creating a catalogue of the live items for members to peruse beforehand. Invitations and RSVP cards will be sent soon with a return date of March 15. We have room for 100 attendees. We also have centerpiece decorations, auction paddles and frames that were ordered for the 2020 fund raiser which had to be cancelled.

George Preckwinkle  
Seat 1

Chief McGilloway's Report: Rob first addressed our CURRENT SERVICES AND CAPABILITIES. He has found we have a gentleman's agreement with Lee County but no contract on file indicating any medical director on record for us. Our service capabilities are being clarified. Rob has spoken with the Director of EMS for Lee County and a meeting with the Lee County Manager is planned for 3/16 to discuss this. He has asked LC to start the process by providing us with a medic.

Annie Hyder  
Seat 2

Heath Wilder  
Seat 3

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He can/will file an application of Public Convenience and Necessity for Ambulance and Rescue Service (COPCN) based on the meeting and outcome with Lee County.

Rob is collaborating with Captiva Island and Matlacha/Pine Island who are in the same battle to establish if we (they) have BLS/ALS or First Responder status which needs to be approved by the state. Presently only Rob is providing a higher level of service here on Useppa and he will not allow his staff to render such services until the questions with Lee County are answered.

The Chief studied our financial status and reported that our accounts are past due [REDACTED]. Some of that is from fuel bills, Lee Co. waste, and one bill [REDACTED] was for Target Solutions. He has been communicating with these vendors to reduce what we owe where possible and has rectified the accounts.

He found that despite being tax exempt we have been paying sales tax. He has contacted the state and received a new tax-exempt certificate for purchasing.

Additional, solutions to reduce costs are to join Matlacha and Captiva who have been joint purchasing for the past 6 months.

He is also updating and establishing new accounts for purchasing.

He reports we have 329 vendors, some of which are unnecessary. He will further examine the Wi-Fi, phone, cell phone and TV bill which is [REDACTED] a year.

He is recommending that we update our quick books to maximize its potential and be clearer.

He suggests a solution of linking our bank account for automatic transaction input which would give us immediate tracking and accountability. Already he has reduced our expenditures for cell phone, O2 tanks, tax exemption and as stated in process of reducing Wi-Fi and tv services.

Regarding 911 calls, the Chief provided a graph of how the services were distributed from 12-30-21 to 2-10-22.

There have been 17 calls: 31% from homeowners, 31% from guests, 25% from employees and 13 % from contractors. Five would qualify as needing BLS care, 4 for ALS care, 6 were trauma/head injury and the final 2 were related to wellness.

Regarding Staff and Payroll: we have 11 active staff, including our Chief, 9 have worked to date. This includes 2 medics, 8 EMT's and 1 first responder. Seven are employed by other agencies. Four are not.

The current average cost per [REDACTED] but new salaries will be based on time, experience, and education. A chart was provided to view and clarify.

Our future staffing model will be determined by Lee County and the medical direction we will receive.

Currently we have an agreement with Upper Captiva for their staff to help with coverage. He is also working on a similar arrangement with the chief on Pine Island.

Rob's goal is to always have two here on island with experience.

The Chief then reported on his OPERATIONAL FINDINGS AND STATUS: He has worked diligently to reorganize the home, station, and files. He collaborated with Peter, Sawyer and Suzy to gain access to the computers.

He would like to revisit the buildout of the station with appropriate functionality for staff facilities and storage. He is requesting an exhaust system with vents and fans in the windows to reduce exposure to carbon.

For the office, he would like appropriate office furniture, shelving for working, storage and staff training; white boards; a mounted projector for training/meetings; monitors for computer or a laptop with docking station. He also would like a printer and scanner for bulk scanning with our lighter office unit moved to the clinic.

Next, Rob reported on his assessment of the fire apparatus. He found the EMS-Rescue cart 221 insufficient for our needs with limited life expectancy. He suggests the cart equipment be reconfigured for best use and that we consider a better alternative vehicle to meet the needs of Useppa for patient care.

One fire truck is not in service due to a fuel pump issue, another has an air leak which leaves a carbon problem. Another, vehicle support 221 (6x) runs poorly, stalls and has limited turning radius. It is apparent there are no records of pump testing on either of the first two vehicles.



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Rob's solution is that he's contacted Bonita Springs to send EVT to evaluate the two engines and possibly handle the pump testing. The support 221 is temporarily being reconfigured to support fire attack within its capabilities.

The marine vehicle needed a great deal of cleaning, and its last service is unknown. He is unsure if it is insured. It is being evaluated for patient care and transport. It will need dock access for stretchers and other EMS equipment. The boat has been cleaned, needs service and Rob is creating a list of what needs done. He is working with other Chiefs to determine viable solutions for service.

In the future we may want to assess what our water capabilities need to be to support our homes, region, and other islands. Rob is communicating and bartering with other agencies for immediate needs. He has scheduled inspections for our hoses, ladders, and air packs, all for mid-February.

Rob has found the stretcher and stair chair not inspected. The Zoll monitor will be serviced in March (REDACTED). He has disposed of all expired equipment on our fleet and in the clinic. He also reorganized the clinic cabinets. He is currently calculating the cost, depreciation, and life expectancy for all equipment. He has contacted companies for service and maintenance contracts. Our stretcher needs to be replaced, and he is pricing a stair chair and evaluating if we need any other new equipment to support the needs on the island.

For training, the Chief sees the need to establish a system to ensure travel and transport of staff and equipment for mandatory annual training on the mainland. He has also scheduled physicals with Lee Health within the next few weeks. This is a requirement for Workman's comp.

Grants: The Chief finalized a grant that was in progress prior to his hiring, he completed the requirements for approval. (REDACTED)

Furthermore, the State approved him as our new fire chief. His approval allows him to log in to the state data base to manage our department and staffing.

The Chief has been assessing the water access points (WAP), water supply system. He has determined that the piping is too small, the current location and access could be improved, and there is a need for access at the airstrip. He is presently testing and mapping to evaluate the needs of the island with the addition of dry hydrants and pump houses which would also give us more power and time fighting a fire, and hopefully provide a stronger insurance rating.

Our WEBSITE, [www.useppafire.org](http://www.useppafire.org) needs updating to be compliant with Sunshine Laws and to be ADA compliant. We are still trying to access our Facebook account.

The chief then addressed NEW BUSINESS. When asked what the expectations of the board are right now, he was told he has been meeting our expectations quite well. Besides his thorough assessment of the situation at present and what needs to be done in the future, he has been out in the Useppa community meeting many homeowners and much of the staff. He plans to host a pancake breakfast in March to further interface with everyone on the island.

The Chief is also asking the Island to clearly tell him what their expectations are. He wants to serve and communicate well with Donald, JR, Joel, and the employees. He is also asking clarification of how the Island wants the Fire Department to service guests. Donald then assured him that he is easy to talk with and welcomes further communication.

The Chief's goal is to create a true partnership with the island suggesting weekly meetings encompassing Operations, Service and the Fire Department. He suggests ways to strengthen communication through Direct Radio, the Web and an App which he further describes in his power point presentation included with these notes on our web site. His presentation enumerates how better inter communication with contractors and the island infrastructure, plus sharing information regarding the number of visitors on island, Covid, emergency weather, helicopter notice and procedure, home occupancy etc. will help him better prepare for situations and to appropriately train his staff to service the community.

His email address is [rmcgilloway@useppafire.org](mailto:rmcgilloway@useppafire.org)

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The Chief stressed that if islanders have a concern, he wants to be contacted through 911, letting him and his trained staff then decide if the situation is an emergency. He does welcome visits to the firehouse as the doors are always open.

The Chief pointed out that the Useppa Island FD, which is no longer a Volunteer Company, will be a true combination FD providing the legal and required services to our island. Please refer to his power point presentation for further details of how he envisions we will be structured in the future.

He is focused on sprinklers, Knox boxes and home signage to improve our protection. Right now we have [REDACTED] home owners with Knox boxes leaving [REDACTED] without.

He is envisioning a medical database portal for owners and employees, building inspections, extinguisher training and ways to improve guest and visitor guidelines for emergency services on this island. He is also recommending employee CPR and stop the bleed classes for new hires. He will explore having a contract with an MD, LPN or such to provide on island bi-weekly service for checkups/medications during season.

He also hopes to restart a viable volunteer program.

Chief Rob McGilloway has created an impressive statement about the Useppa Island Fire Department's Mission, Vision, and its Core Values. Please take the time to review this toward the end of his power point presentation and will be added to our website listed above.

He is also focused on constructing approximately 120 policies and procedures which will include homeowner and employee guidelines for emergencies. These will be made available to all upon completion.

At 11:55 Heath moved to adjourn the meeting, and Annie Hyder seconded the motion. All agreed and the motion passed. The next board meeting will be held in person on the island and on Zoom on Friday, March 4th, 2022.