

MEETING MINUTES

SUWANNEE VALLEY UNSOLVED

*Board of Directors
136 SE Calab Court
Lake City, FL 32025*

**D. Wayne Kelly, Chairman
Patty Koon, Secretary**



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MEETING MINUTES SUWANNEE VALLEY UNSOLVED BOARD OF DIRECTORS March 25, 2024 7:00 PM (1900 hrs.) Teen Town Community Center Lake City, Columbia County, Florida

Interim Board Chairman Greg Burnsed called to order the Meeting of the Suwannee Valley Unsolved Board of Directors at 7:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the board.

After the Pledge of Allegiance was recited a roll call was performed by Heidi Snipes for Interim secretary, Patty Koon with the following Board Members present:

Jason Futch
Greg Burnsed
Wayne Kelly (via telephone)
Heidi Marie Snipes
Heather Williams
Kalesia Brown
Katie Jeffries (via Zoom, later telephone)
Larry Mason
Patty Koon
Chuck Tompkins was absent for unknown reason

Following the roll call, the prior SVU Meeting Minutes were reviewed individually via email, Heidi Snipes made motion to correct board member's name Donna Koon to Patty Koon, Randy Roberts seconded, board unanimously approved.

TREASURERS REPORT

Randy informed the board that TD Bank put his personal Post Office box address on the SVU checks, however, they will be corrected by TD as soon as possible.

Randy stated that the winner of the 50/50 raffle graciously donated the winnings to SVU in which it was deposited into TD account. Randy gave an approximate bank balance of \$688.00

Jason Futch stated we are still waiting for Wayne Kelly to turn in \$100 raffle money.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

Jason Futch started off by welcoming everybody to the Executive Board of Directors meeting tonight at Teen Town in Lake City, and thanked Greg Burnsed for setting up the meeting location. Jason stated we've had a very productive couple of months since our last meeting on January 25th.

Jason stated he wanted to acknowledge Board Member Patty Koon for raising the most funds in the 50/50 raffle this year with almost \$1000.00 being raised in total.

Jason and Heidi have been working on getting some fundraising events in place with one being a silent auction on September 14, 2024, possibly at the Lake City Country Club. Jason stated that the logistics are not planned out as of yet, however, we do have donations for this event coming including two (2) tickets to Universal Studios, four (4) tickets to the Florida Aquarium, and a gift basket from Texas Roadhouse.

Jason also stated that Heidi has made a deal with Clemson University football, and that the head football coach, Dabo Swinney, is going to sign off on an autograph photo and a helmet, if we send the University a helmet and cover the shipping cost.

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers have also agreed to send an autographed photo of their quarterback, Baker Mayfield.

Jason stated that since this is a working organization he is requesting assistance with these fundraisers from the board moving forward, as Jason recently met with Ryan Backmann, Executive Director of Project Cold Case to discuss issues pertaining to VOCA. Jason stated we have officially received our VOCA letter but are expected to take some heavy cuts this year up to 40% and Jason stated there is a very good chance that SVU will not receive the VOCA grant this year.

February 23, 2024, we were invited to participate in the Missing Adults Day in Jacksonville at City Hall. There were several upset survivors that attended the event, including a local survivor that was disappointed in how the program was conducted along with some miscommunications with the John Rowan Junior Foundation, however, it was mutually agreed upon that SVU not participate in Missing Adults Day going forward in Jacksonville because it is imperative that we put together our own program so that we focus on our own victims and survivors in our area.

April 20, 2024, is the Multicultural Festival, we will have a few baskets that are planning to be raffled off.

Jason stated once we receive some grants, we'll be able to hire a Victims Advocate and we'll also be able to get some programs up and running so families in our area will have more services and more support so we can bridge the gap between families and law enforcement so they can come together with communications.

Jason stated in October (date to be determined) he is planning a chili and macaroni and cheese cook off. Larry Mason stated if he's not working on hurricane relief he will assist.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Interim Chairman of the board, Greg Burnsed announced we need to conduct an election for a new chairman of the Board since Jason Futch resigned at the last board meeting.

Heidi nominated Jackson Koon as Election Advisor, Greg Burnsed seconded, and the board unanimously approved. All board members voted except for Chuck Tompkins due to absence; however, he elected to defer prior to

the meeting.

Following the election, Jason announced Wayne Kelly will be our new Chairperson of the Board until the November 4th elections when our new board will then take place.

Jason asked Greg Burnsed, the presiding Chairperson of the Board, if he would like to return as Vice Chairman or move to Immediate Past Chairman. Chairman Burnsed elected to return to the Vice Chair.

Greg Burnsed stated we will need nominations for secretary of the board to replace Wayne Kelly.

Board member Patty Koon was nominated by Heidi Snipes, seconded by Greg Burnsed and unanimously approved by the board.

SPECIAL ORDERS

Presiding Chairman Greg Burnsed asked if board members had a chance to review the application for approval for board of directors' position for Jackson Koon. Greg Burnsed made a motion to accept, Larry Mason seconded the motion, with the board unanimously approving.

NEW BUSINESS

Open discussion regarding responsibilities. Jason stated he has been working on an event for the organization something similar to the missing person event that was done in Jacksonville, but instead it should be a day of remembrance giving the families that have lost loved ones or have missing persons here in our area the opportunity to tell their stories and just let their families be known and heard.

Kalesia Brown mentioned maybe putting together a mini festival in front of the courthouse in Lake City that could be a mutual area for a lot of people to come together.

Kalesia stated she has spoken with some families in this area as far as posting tables displaying their family members. Kalesia stated she has spoken with some local food trucks that are willing to set up on that day. Kalesia also stated she knows of a couple of local dance groups and singers in the community that could possibly put on small performances and was also wanting to have the Sheriff's Office have a tent setup and maybe have board member Larry Mason setup promoting his gun classes.

Jason asked if this was in relation to the walk that we had talked about before in the previous meeting in January, Kalesia said, "yes and no," she stated that she basically has taken away the walk.

Jason stated that he had met with Mayor Witt, he likes the idea of us doing something in the community to further the acknowledgments of cold case victims, honoring families who have been affected by homicide even if the case was solved or unsolved. Jason stated that Mayor Witt has also suggested providing a Proclamation as well, we would just need to write it up send it to the mayor's office, and he'll issue it publicly.

Kalesia mentioned that the owner of the Kountry Korner restaurant owns some land in the downtown area of Main and Marion Street and has offered for us to use the land and write it off as a donation.

Jason stated the Treasurer, Randy Roberts would need an amount or an estimate of what it would cost so he can issue a receipt of donation for tax purposes.

Jason stated he had a discussion with Chief Keith Davis with the Live Oak Police Department. Returning to the VOCA discussion that was previously discussed in the Executive Director's Update, Jason mentioned Chief Davis shared with him that the Live Oak Police Department expects budget cuts this year. Chief Davis stated a little over \$100,000 is normally donated to the Live Oak Police Departments Victim Advocate Program from VOCA, but that was reduced by \$40,000.

Jason stated that Donna Koon has invited SVU back for another year at the Branford library.

Greg Burnsed stated he feels SVU should raise their expectations when it comes to fundraising, for example try reaching out to Target and Walmart, Katie Jeffries and Randy Roberts agreed.

Greg stated the Board of Education declined their grant and that money is still available and it's approximately \$120,000 Greg said all we've got to do is put a proposal together and have families come in supporting it.

Jason and Patty sat down and discussed having an organizational uniform and implementing a proper uniform procedure when we're out in public and when we go to meetings, we should wear a SVU shirt.

Board member Patty Koon ordered polo shirts for board members, which were distributed to members that were present at the meeting and will need to be worn at public events such as the Wildflower Festival that's coming up and the Multicultural Festival. This will show that we are representatives of Suwannee Valley Unsolved.

Jason mentioned the Google, Microsoft award, and stated last year, the Florida Sheriff's Association granted rewards on Darlene Messer, Jarrick Lindsey, Linda Raulerson, Linville Curtis cases, they are all county cases.

Greg mentioned maybe seeing if Katie could get a corporate sponsor to team up with Suwannee Valley Unsolved to sponsor her series, Katie say she would have to get with her station and see just what, if anything they could do.

Jason stated he has been in contact with Kerry Hagler, he used to work for the college, and he's been talking about maybe getting our own series here in Lake City and putting it on the Florida Gateway College channel and seeing if they can donate that space to us and maybe perhaps talk about in the Suwannee Valley. Jason used the case of John Robert Thomas as an example.

Kalesia suggested maybe see if we could have local actors and actresses play roles and have dramatizations. Jason added that he has considered that, using the Detra McGuire case as an example. In 1991, WCJB 20 did a section re-enactment of the Detra McGuire homicide. Although it was not public, it was used as an investigative tool to make the suspect crack under pressure.

Kalesia Brown suggested maybe doing a podcast and Heather Williams suggested getting a Tic-Tok video going.

Jason and Jackson showed a banner for SVU donated to us by Patty and Jackson Koon.

Interim Chairman, Greg Burnsed addressed Proposed Bylaws Amendment Article 6 Section 3 Meeting Dates and Times. Board member Patty Koon suggested not having group dinners to allow board members more time at home with families, Greg Burnsed, Randy Roberts, Jackson Koon and Larry Mason agreed with dropping the dinners. A motion was made by Randy Roberts to have business meetings on the first Saturday of each month and the following meeting would be on the first Monday of the month then alternating them, motion was seconded by Larry Mason.

Next board meeting – Saturday, May 4, 2024

Location: Suwannee County Emergency Management Office

Address: 617 Ontario Avenue, SW

Live Oak, FL 32064

Meeting Time: 6:00 PM (no dinner provided)

Motion to adjourn Randy Roberts and seconded by Larry Mason

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Minutes Submitted By: Patty Koon on April 1st, 2024

These minutes have been reviewed and certified on _____, _____, 2024 at _____PM

Board Chairman

Board Secretary