

MEETING MINUTES

SUWANNEE VALLEY UNSOLVED

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

D. Wayne Kelly, Chairman
Danny Federico, Secretary



Facebook.com/SuwanneeValleyUnsolved
@SuwValUnsolved
Info@SuwanneeValleyUnsolved.Org

Meeting Minutes
Suwannee Valley Unsolved, Inc. Board of Directors
Monday, July 1
6:07 p.m. (1800 hrs.) at Teen Town
Lake City, Columbia County, Florida

Chuck Tompkins called the meeting of the Suwannee Valley Board of Directors to order at 6:07 p.m., beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Tompkins then immediately led the Board into the invocation.

At 6:10 p.m., Heidi Snipes performed the roll call. The following Board Members were present:

Jason Futch
Chuck Tompkins
Heather Williams
Katie Jeffries (via Phone)
Larry Mason
Randy Roberts
Heidi Snipes (via Phone)

Wayne Kelly (unexcused) and Kalesia Brown (excused) were absent from this Board Meeting.

Guests attending the meeting were Ricky Williams and Danny Federico.

At 6:12 p.m., the Board began reviewing the Secretary's Reports, which consisted of the minutes of the Saturday, May 4, Board of Directors meeting. These were unanimously approved.

At 6:13 p.m., the Board moved into the Treasurer's Report, presented by Treasurer Randy Roberts. He informed the Board that there was \$1,228.80 in expenditures, \$480 in deposits, and

MEETING MINUTES

SUWANNEE VALLEY UNSOLVED

Board of Directors

136 SE Calab Court

Lake City, FL 32025

an ending balance of \$2,008.91 as of the meeting date. Tompkins called for a vote to approve the Secretary's Report as read. This item was unanimously approved.

Continuing with business at 6:13 p.m., Interim Secretary Heidi Snipes presented the Fundraising Report. She informed the Board that the Fishing Charter Trip fundraiser broke even at \$500. Discussion about an upcoming raffle involving two 40-gallon YETI coolers acquired by Tompkins.

The raffle would consist of filling one cooler with alcoholic beverages and one with non-alcoholic beverages. Ticket prices were briefly discussed, with Tompkins suggesting that the Board get a rough estimate of how much alcohol would fill the cooler before coming up with a price in order to make a profit.

At 6:20 p.m., Executive Director Jason Futch began giving his report. He reported an increase in Suwannee Valley Unsolved's public awareness, citing positive feedback received from an FDLE agent at the Wellborn Blueberry Festival. Futch stated that the agent had indicated that the State was watching the organization's activity.

He continued, announcing a new partnership with "Light the Way," a missing persons advocacy group from Washington State. Futch stated the organization will begin highlighting one Suwannee Valley case each month starting in September. It will also add a special tab on its website to highlight Suwannee Valley Unsolved cases through a drop-down menu.

Futch requested the Board's opinion on which missing persons case to submit for the first feature. Heather Williams suggested Kamrie Mitchell, while Katie Jeffries suggested one that hasn't been highlighted as often, such as Benny Battle. Following a brief discussion, the Board agreed to have Battle as the first featured case.

At this time (6:25 p.m.), Martina Ratliff Lundy's family members joined the meeting. They included Deborah, Tammy and Austin.

Futch then wrapped up his report by stating the Victims Advocate Committee met on June 19.

At 6:34 p.m., the Board moved into the second reading and possible action on the proposed Social Media Policy. The proposed policy arose amid recent concerns about social media activity,

MEETING MINUTES

SUWANNEE VALLEY UNSOLVED

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

particularly regarding posts made by Board members that might reflect poorly on the organization. During the discussion, concerns about imposing restrictions on personal social media accounts were brought up, with the right to freedom of speech becoming the main issue.

Following some discussion, it was decided to table the Social Media Policy until the Saturday, July 27, Board of Directors meeting. In the meantime, the policy would be revised to focus on maintaining the organization's reputation while respecting personal freedoms.

At 6:45 p.m., discussion on the Suwannee High School banner was tabled until affordable prices were available for review. Immediately following this, Tompkins suggested also tabling the discussion on the Internal Affairs Committee due to the presence of visitors.

At 6:46 p.m., the Board moved into the Election of New Board Members: Danny Federico and Richard "Ricky" Williams. Each individual provided a brief introduction about themselves, and were both unanimously approved.

The election of new board officers took place at 6:49 p.m., with the following seats open: vice chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and chaplain. Tompkins was elected for the position of Vice Chairman, while Federico was elected as Secretary, Heather was elected as Treasurer, and Ricky was elected as Chaplain.

At 6:56 p.m., the Board moved past the assessment of the Hookin' It Charter and the YETI Cooler Fundraiser, as those two items had been discussed earlier in the meeting. The discussion then moved to the possibility of returning the Board Meeting dates to the first Saturday of every other month. Meetings will continue to take place at 6 p.m., with locations alternating between Lake City and the Emergency Operations Center in Live Oak. This was unanimously approved.

At 6:58 p.m., Futch opened the discussion on the Hope and Justice Dinner. During this time, he informed that the event was initially planned as a gala to raise funds, but due to a lack of support and higher costs, it was restructured as a dinner or banquet.

Futch continued, stating the original venue for the event was set to be the Lake City Women's Club, which offered ample space. However, the building was condemned a week after the deposit was made. Subsequently, Wayne Kelly secured the Grand Hall at the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park for \$500, which is less than the usual \$800 rental fee.

MEETING MINUTES

SUWANNEE VALLEY UNSOLVED

Board of Directors

136 SE Calab Court

Lake City, FL 32025

Futch laid out the event's objectives, stating the Hope and Justice Dinner aims to significantly raise awareness and funds for unsolved homicide and missing persons cases. Plans include a silent auction, raffle, guest speakers, and a memorial "honor roll" for local victims of unsolved homicides.

As of the meeting date, silent auction and raffle items include: seven (7) 10-day vacation stays in the Caribbean (not all-inclusive) courtesy of Elite Island Resorts Caribbean; three (3) hunting trips to South America and South Africa courtesy of Charity Safaris; one (1) autograph from Sheriff Grady Judd courtesy of the Polk County Sheriff's Office; one (1) autographed bobblehead of Lee County Sheriff Carmine Marceno; one (1) coffee basket autographed by Derek Levasseur of Big Brother fame courtesy of Criminal Coffee Company; four (4) tickets to Wild Adventures; two (2) tickets to the Jacksonville Symphony; two (2) tickets to Crayola Experience in Orlando; two (2) tickets to Universal Studios Orlando; two (2) tickets to the Repertory Theatre in Fort Meyers; four (4) one-hour tickets to Bravo Entertainment Center in Jacksonville; and one (1) Thin Blue Line USA stitched flag courtesy of Thin Blue Line.

Efforts are ongoing to secure more donations, including items from universities and potential contributions from other community members.

Guest speakers were the next topic for discussion, with the lineup consisting of Charlene Shunick, a missing persons advocate out of New Orleans; representatives from Moxxy Forensics who will highlight their partnership and work in forensic genetic genealogy; Lieutenant George Harrigan from the St. Johns Sheriff's Office, who will present their Cold Case Program; local survivor Laura Brotherton, whose father was murdered in Lake City in 1971; and Aphrodite Jones, a well-known true crime author and TV personality, who agreed to be the keynote speaker for a significantly reduced honorarium of \$1,000.

In a detailed discussion on Moxxy Forensics' participation, Futch informed that Kaycee Connolly and Katie Thomas expressed their desire to participate, but they have requested that Suwannee Valley Unsolved pay their airfare. They will, however, take care of their own car and lodging.

Futch suggested not paying for their airfare or seeing if they could fly into Orlando for a lower price. He added that he would prefer to provide lodging rather than pay airfare. Thompkins suggested tabling the issue to discuss it more in-depth at a special meeting, along with the Social Media Policy and the Internal Affairs Committee.

MEETING MINUTES

SUWANNEE VALLEY UNSOLVED

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

Concerns were also raised about the length of the program due to the number of speakers. Katie Jefferies suggested that speakers be limited to 10-15 minutes each, except for St. Johns County (25 minutes due to a video presentation) and Aphrodite Jones (keynote speaker).

Additional discussion involved ticket prices, which Futch proposed at \$50 per seat and \$400 per table (six seats per table). Tables would include two bottles of wine (white and red) and entry into the raffle. Complementary tickets would be provided to board members, law enforcement, media, and families of unsolved homicide and missing person cases.

Jeffries also suggested Futch contact Aphrodite to see if she would host a VIP meet-and-greet as an additional fundraising opportunity.

The discussion then briefly turned to the alcohol arrangements and decorations.

To honor local cold case victims and families during the dinner, Futch suggested a "roll call" take place. Each name would be listed via a slide show and read off. Additional ideas included using photos of local victims as part of the table decorations.

At 7:44 p.m., before the meeting was adjourned, Thompkins and Futch addressed the family of Martina Ratliff Lundy, offering them Suwannee Valley Unsolved's assistance. Futch also proposed that Lundy's case be the first feature on Light the Way's website instead of Benny Battle, which would be featured in October.

At 8 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.

These minutes have been reviewed and certified on Saturday, Sept. 27, 2024, at 8:57 p.m.

X Pammy F.
Board Chairman (Acting)

X [Signature]
Board Secretary (Acting)
Witness [Signature]