

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
Saturday, September 7
7 p.m. (1900 hrs.) at Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranch Cafetorium
Live Oak, Suwannee County, Florida

Secretary Danny Federico, acting as Chairman, called the meeting of the Suwannee Valley Unsolved (SVU) Board of Directors to order at 7 p.m., beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Federico then performed the roll call. The following Board Members were present:

Kalesia Brown
Danny Federico
Jason Futch
Katie Jeffries (via Phone)
Larry Mason
Heidi Snipes
Heather Williams
Ricky Williams

Chairman Wayne Kelly (excused) and Vice Chairman Chuck Tompkins (unexcused) were absent from this Board Meeting.

Also attending the meeting were Intern Kylie Vickers, SVU Victim Advocate Missy Norris, and SVU Echoes to Advocacy Committeeman John Szaroleta.

Chaplain Ricky Williams then led the Board into a moment of silence in place of a formal prayer to honor all victims of cold cases. This was suggested as a recurring option or addition for future meetings.

MEETING MINUTES

SUWANNEE VALLEY UNSOLVED

Board of Directors

136 SE Calab Court

Lake City, FL 32025

At 7:03 p.m., Federico presented the July 1 and July 27 meeting minutes for review and approval. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Larry Mason, followed by a second from Heidi Snipes. The motion was approved unanimously.

At 7:06 p.m., discussion moved into the Treasurer's Report. However, due to logistical difficulties, the report was not presented. Treasurer Heather Williams and Executive Director Jason Futch had planned to work together on the report, but were unable to get the bank statements printed in time. The statements will be presented for approval at the November meeting.

Discussion immediately transitioned to the Fundraising Report. At this time, Snipes informed that the Board raised \$310 from the cooler raffle. While the amount was considerable, she noted that the raffle took place in the middle of the Hope and Justice Dinner ticket sales, which may have limited its success. Snipes added that the Board has another cooler available for a potential January fundraiser, ideally coinciding with New Year's Eve or another major event.

At 7:08 p.m., Futch took over to present his Executive Director's Report, beginning with the announcement that SVU's website was scheduled to launch the day before the Hope and Justice Dinner (Friday, September 13). The website will feature a comprehensive database of all unsolved homicides, missing persons, and death investigations in the Suwannee Valley region. Futch stated this database is likely to be the most comprehensive in the state, even more so than the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) database, which lacks cases from certain local law enforcement agencies.

He continued, moving on to discuss how he was going to start focusing on the administrative side of the organization. With the organization approaching its one-year anniversary, he emphasized the need for a self-sufficient Board. He stated that moving forward, the board chairperson should take full responsibility for organizing meetings, following up on action items, and communicating directly with the administrative side. Futch reiterated that the heartbeat of the organization is the Board itself, and the goal is to ensure a smooth transition as the organization evolves. He mentioned plans to focus on policy and procedure, which would help guide the organization's future operations.

Futch then proceeded to his next item of discussion, stating the organization's relationship with Baker County is getting stronger. He stated a potential Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is

MEETING MINUTES

SUWANNEE VALLEY UNSOLVED

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

in discussion, which would formally establish a partnership with the Baker County Sheriff's Office. Futch highlighted the importance of this partnership, as it would allow SVU to assist in cases like the Barniak case, which originated in Lake City but has connections to Baker County.

At 7:18 p.m., Futch requested an additional item be added under the Executive Director's Report to discuss officers and attendance. A motion was made by Snipes, followed by a second from Heather. The addition was subsequently approved unanimously.

At this time, Futch discussed the importance of officer attendance at meetings. He expressed concern over the absence of both the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson at such a critical juncture, particularly one week before the Hope and Justice Dinner. Futch proposed that attendance should be mandatory for officers and that failure to attend should result in consequences, as outlined in the bylaws. This includes officers who do not respond to communications or attend board meetings consistently. The proposal suggested that officers should be required to either attend in person or at least call in to meetings if unable to attend physically. A formal vote on this attendance requirement was postponed until the November meeting, where the Board would consider an amendment to the bylaws to enforce officer attendance.

At 7:37 p.m., discussion turned to the section outlined for announcements. However, there were none. There was also no unfinished business.

Discussion immediately turned to the potential nomination of John Szaroleta to serve on the Board of Directors. Szaroleta has a significant background in law enforcement, including over 30 years of service with the Volusia County Sheriff's Office. He also worked for Stetson University and with the Air Force conducting security surveys. Szaroleta's nomination was proposed based on his proven work ethic and involvement in securing the Boys Ranch for the Hope and Justice Dinner venue. After a bit of discussion, Snipes made a motion to accept Szaroleta onto the Board. Her motion was seconded by Heather, and approved unanimously.

At 7:43 p.m., the Board moved into the section outlined for New Business. The only items were updates regarding the Hope and Justice Dinner. First, the catering contract with the Florida Sheriff's Boys Ranch was reviewed. The total cost for food, drinks, and desserts for 150 to 200 people was \$1,500. The menu was set to include squash casserole, macaroni and cheese, mashed potatoes with gravy, rolls, sweet and unsweet tea, coffee, and tiramisu as dessert. It was also noted that the Board would be responsible for setup and cleanup of the dining area.

MEETING MINUTES

SUWANNEE VALLEY UNSOLVED

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

The contract with the Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranch was presented to the Board and unanimously approved.

At 7:53 p.m., Futch proceeded to discuss the Hope and Justice Dinner's timeline as printed in the event's program. This was followed by Missy Norris and Szaroleta taking over to discuss table arrangements and decorations. Norris explained that eight long rows of tables would be set up, ensuring that attendees could see the stage and move around the venue without difficulty. Additionally, each table would be adorned with black tablecloths, floating candles, and framed photos of victims to honor their memory.

They continued, noting tables for the raffle tickets would be positioned near the entrance to maximize visibility. The auction items would line the left wall near the stage. Norris noted that setup for the event would begin around 2:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. the day prior in order to be prepared for any last-minute issues.

Futch then noted that the VIPs, survivors, and special guests would be seated at the front of the venue.

At 8:12 p.m., Futch announced he had forgotten to print the financials, and was unable to provide the total amount raised from the event as of September 7.

Futch then took a moment to present the event's two banners and a few of the raffle items for the Board to look at.

Following this, discussion turned to information regarding Aphrodite Jones's arrival. Futch informed the Board that, with Szaroleta's assistance, a cabin was secured at the Youth Ranch for Jones to stay at. It was noted that she would also be receiving a tour of the Ranch during her stay. At this time, Norris offered one of her vehicles for Jones to use during her stay so she could come and go as she pleased.

Additionally, guest accommodations were made for Charlie Schunick and Katie Jones to stay at the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park.

The Board then briefly discussed a Survivor's Meeting that would be held the day of the Hope and Justice Dinner at 2 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

SUWANNEE VALLEY UNSOLVED

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

At 8:44 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.

These minutes have been reviewed and certified on Saturday, Nov. 2, 2024, at 8:17 p.m.

x *Danny Federico*
Board Chairman

x *Heidi*
Board Secretary

Julia
witness

Long
witness