

Manatee County Fire Marshals Committee

Regular Meeting Meetings of February 13th, 2023

Parrish Admin Building, 10am

Members Present:

Fire Marshal Rodney Kwiatkowski – WMFR
Deputy Fire Marshal Marc Massella – CHFR
Deputy Fire Marshal Leticia Ownbey – PFD
Fire Marshal Chris Melser – BFD
Fire Marshal Michael Blake- EMFR
Deputy Fire Marshal Frank Meola – SMFR
Fire Marshal Andrell Miller - NFRD
Bureau Administrator Jalex Leissler – WMFR

Members Not Present:

Fire Marshal Jane Herrin – LKFD

Guests Present:

Fire Marshal Eric Center - CHFR
Alex Onishenko – Retired

1. **The meeting was called to order at 10:08am by FM Kwiatkowski. The pledge of allegiance followed the call to order.**
2. **Changes to Agenda:** *There were none.*
3. **Guest Comments/Presentations:** *There were none at this meeting.*
4. **Old Business:**
 - a. **Trainings:**
 - i. **Ag. Training at EMFR – FM Blake:** *The Committee decided to strike this from further agendas as FM Blake is having trouble communicating with his contact.*

Chair

Fire Marshal Rodney Kwiatkowski
(941) 201-7904
kwiatkr@wmfr.org

Vice Chair

Deputy Fire Marshal Marc Massella
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- ii. **Captive Air Training – FM Blake:** *FM Blake has a list of current RSVPs. This training is on February 20th at EMFR starting at 8am. Those wishing to register should contact Wendy Dixon. There is no cost to attend this training.*
 - iii. **Sprinkler Class with Jessica Cox – FM Blake:** *There is nothing to report at the moment. DFM Massella will take over this task as he has helpful contacts.*
 - iv. **Board of Appeals Training – FM Kwiatkowski:** *This training will be held February 29th from 6-9pm at Cedar Hammock. The notice to appeal emails have been sent out to the board. FM Kwiatkowski invited the members of the committee to attend. He also described the two cases that will be presented to the board.*
 - v. **Identifying Hazmat during inspections training:** *This training will be March 12th. FM Kwiatkowski encouraged the committee to bring their staff to this training.*
- b. **County Gate Systems:** *FM Kwiatkowski recommended that a subcommittee be formed to work with code enforcement and the county on this issue. FM Melser mentioned Radio Shop and commented that he is still getting complaints from the public. FM Kwiatkowski asked for volunteers for the subcommittee. There were no volunteers. FM Kwiatkowski then nominated FM Melser to head this subcommittee. FM Melser accepted. FM Center stressed the importance of including other entities in the discussion as they use the same gate code. DFM Massella volunteered to assist FM Melser in this subcommittee.*

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c. Mobile Food Vendors

- i. **Decal update:** *DFM Ownbey presented the updated decal to the group. She then asked the group for tweaks. FM Kwiatkowski presented the group with an alternate design. DFM Massella suggested adding a space on the decal for a “pass/fail” option. FM Kwiatkowski confirmed that it is possible to add this. Mr. Onishenko suggested that mobile food vendor language be added to the decal. FM Center brought up that Clearwater’s sticker is new every year.*

FM Kwiatkowski mentioned that on February 8th, WMFR hosted a mock inspection of two mobile food vendors and invited the city to observe. He commented that the truck had Clearwater’s sticker on it. FM Kwiatkowski went on to explain that the decal was minimized in an attempt to incorporate planning and zoning’s comments at the last meeting.

FM Melser told the committee that BFD has created a OneDrive file that can be used by anyone. All inspections they perform will be placed in this file. FM Melser offered to email the link to this file to anyone who wanted it. He pointed out that this might be a good alternative to a sticker.

FM Center inquired as to the county’s involvement in the mobile food vendor inspections. FM Kwiatkowski clarified that the county was invited to the demonstration to show them the fire department process as they are developing their own.

The committee was asked what route they would like to take when it comes to mobile food vendor inspections. There is general agreement that FM Melser’s form should be used as it has been reviewed by an attorney. Melser will bring final form to the next meeting to present it and the committee will vote on it.

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- d. **Investigative Process:** *The committee agreed to strike this item from the agenda moving forward.*

5. New Business

- a. **MCFCA Fee Schedule:** *FM Kwiatkowski presented the committee with the new fee schedule on the Manatee County Fire Chiefs' Association letterhead. FM Center inquired as to who was involved in the study and who intends to adopt the new fee schedule. FM Melser said that the city will not be adopting. FM Center discussed the firework permit fee. He contacted the company that performed the study and determined they had misinterpreted the language. The company agreed that the fee should be \$500 as opposed to the \$320 reflected in the study.*

Mr. Onishenko opined that the life safety amount is too high. There began general discussion about the fees. Mr. Onishenko once again objected to the 'extreme' fees.

FM Kwiatkowski read aloud an email from Chief Bailey with the directive from the MCFCA to put the information from the report onto the MCFCA letterhead.

FM Center suggested adding nuisance fees to the schedule. An error in the schedule was also brought to the attention of the committee. It was determined that the error be corrected and two options be brought before the MCFCA. Option one will have nuisance fees added and option two will not.

Further discussion ensued over the high fees and the possibility of lowering them. FM Kwiatkowski reminded the committee of the clear assignment given to them. The schedule has been voted on and adopted by the MCFCA and the committee is just to present them with the schedule on letterhead. The committee expressed a desire to bring their concerns to the MCFCA.

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6. Department Reports:

- a. **North River Fire Department:** *FM Miller informed the group that NRRFD is attempting to increase their social media presence. This is in an attempt to have the public understand the services the fire department provides in preparation for their addition of an ad valorem assessment.*

FM Miller also informed the group that NRRFD will be hiring another inspector in March. This position will be half operations, half prevention.

FM Miller talked about a recent structure fire. A tarp next to a shed caught fire. The flame spread to the structure. The owner felt the department is to blame because of poor response and planning. The State Fire Marshal was called. Because the fire started outdoors, the SFM decided not to investigate.

- b. **Southern Manatee Fire & Rescue:** *DFM Meola was happy to report that a new inspector will be starting in 2 weeks. Inspector Ronnie Washington will be retiring in September.*
- c. **East Manatee Fire & Rescue:** *Mr. Onishenko has been working part time doing plan review for EMFR. FM Blake has been looking for a new inspector.*
- d. **Parrish Fire Department:** *Nothing to Report.*
- e. **Cedar Hammock Fire Rescue:** *DFM Massella warned the committee to be cautious of third-party inspectors. He recalled a recent incident where a third-party inspector who was not qualified improperly inspected a hood suppression system.*

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- f. **Bradenton Fire Department:** *FM Melser gave an update on the individual who had previously been stealing panels. He is in jail without bond. However, there are websites and pawn shops still selling used parts. This leads authorities to believe there are more than one individual stealing parts and reselling them.*

FM Melser warned the group that the Regata is this weekend, therefore the bridge and Main Street will be closed. He suggested that downtown be avoided.

7. **Next Meeting:** *March 12th, 2024 at 10am- EMFR.*

8. **The meeting was adjourned at 11:54am by FM Kwiatkowski.**

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