

Board Meeting March 20, 2021

Attending: Board members Cary Booth, Victor Shawe, Susanne Apitz, Dinah Davidson, Carolyn Nordstrom, Jackie Lewis, and David Newton, plus seven other active members present or by phone (Bonnie Bowen, Eric Desfachelles, Alina Downer, Lee Dyal, Henry Essary, Jeff Gee, and Rolf Koford), 13 community members, and three guest speakers.

1. Call to Order

President Cary Booth called the meeting to order at 2:11 pm.

2. Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda was adopted after Cary proposed inserting item 7.2 for a change in online meeting tool.

3. Acceptance of Minutes

There being no proposed changes to minutes of the January 20 meeting, Cary moved to accept them as submitted, Susanne seconded his motion, and the vote in favor was unanimous.

4. Reports

4.1. Vice-President (Victor Shawe)

4.1.1. Victor announced the completion of the new helipad and thanked the many helpers and community members whose volunteered labor and donations made the project feasible and successful. He also acknowledged generous donations of materials from Maddux & Sons in Douglas, and Elbrock Water Systems, in Animas. Costing \$7593.19, the project came in under budget.

4.1.2. The helipad still has not been used (if you build it, they won't come?), so the opportunity still exists to be first!

4.2 Fire Chief (David Newton)

4.2.1. Operations

On January 30th, a vehicle fire at milepost 393 ignited a roadside fire. Thanks to John Yerger and Rolf Koford for responding.

4.2.2. Training

Attendance has been okay. We've tested our extrication tools and drafting out of a 'pumpkin' (temporary frameless tank).

4.2.3. Vehicles

4.2.3.1. Brush 236: Andrew Waser replaced the hose reel swivel, and it's working well. A good set of wheel chocks has been added.

4.2.3.2. Brush 9: This coming week, Lance will inspect leaking fuel near lines coming out of fuel injector pump.

4.2.4. Grants

Our VFA grant application was funded. We'll receive about \$430 for purchases of various wildland fire supplies and equipment.

4.2.5. Special Note

Thanks to Victor Shawe for spearheading the Helipad project. It is rare for Portal Rescue to see a project go so quickly from inception to completion.

4.3. EMS Chief (Jackie Lewis)

There were 33 calls in 2020 (a correction from the report in the 2021 newsletter), and just eight calls so far this year.

4.4. Treasurer (Susanne Apitz)

4.4.1. Checking account

4.4.1.1. Revenues for 2020 were \$54,527.16, and expenses came in at \$30,956.98. Revenues exceeded expenditures by \$23,570.18.

4.4.1.2. Revenues so far in 2021 are \$6961.09, including donations totaling \$5057, \$17.92 interest, \$29.67 from Amazon Smile, and \$1856.50 returned from fighting the Price Canyon fire. Expenses have totaled \$12,899.41, including \$7,593.19 in helipad expenses.

4.4.2. Balance sheet

4.4.2.1. Edward Jones

The total value of our Edward Jones accounts is \$113,166.23: Money Market = \$8599.53 + 5 CDs (incl. Muma) of different maturity dates (1, 2 and 3 years) = \$104,566.70.

4.4.2.2. Washington Federal

The total value of our Washington Federal accounts is \$72,231.41: Checking = \$38587.77 plus Rainy Day Fund = \$33643.64.

4.4.3. As of 3/19/21, Portal Rescue assets total \$185,742.64: \$255 in petty cash, \$90 in stamps, and all investments and cash.

4.4.4. The Portal Rescue 2020 tax return problem has been resolved, and no penalties or interest are due.

4.4.5. A new endorsement stamp has been purchased for the Edward Jones account, and a checkbook ordered. All is ready to move the checking account from Washington Federal to Edward Jones.

4.5. Member at Large (Carolyn Nordstrom)

4.5.1. Carolyn credited Delane Blondeau and Jeanne Williams (both present) as founding members of PR.

4.5.2. 2020 was unusually challenging, especially for EMS, and PR response was commendable, indeed it has been community-making: firefighters showed up day or night in weather both good and awful to help EMTs, to land helicopters anywhere from backyards to heliport; radio operators worked in often chaotic conditions handling multiple radios and phones, at times in communication dead ones; Portal residents stepped up with great help, e.g. the volunteers who donated days of intense hard work building the helipad.

4.6. President (Cary Booth)

Cary thanked Victor and his crew and expressed “shock” at the rapidity and efficiency of construction.

5. Continuing Business

5.1. Classroom rental policy

5.1.1. Carolyn suggested the Board continue the recent policy of not renting the classroom in accordance national health guidelines, and until Covid is better controlled through vaccination.

5.1.2. Cary moved that we continue our policy of not renting the Portal Rescue classroom; exceptions would still be made for Red Cross Blood drives supervised by Portal Rescue’s EMT Chief, and for urgent Portal Rescue core business. Victor seconded the motion, and the vote in favor was unanimous.

6. New Business

6.1. Presentation by Chiricahua Community Health Centers, Inc. – See **Appendix A** for details of their organization and proposed services, and a possible agreement (MOU) with Portal Rescue.

6.2. Driveway easements

6.2.1. Helen Snyder approached the Board with a request to approve a legal easement over our entrance road to the properties formerly owned by Mary Willy. Her property has been divided into two parcels, and title companies are hesitant to write policies without legal easements. The legal easement to the properties in question was apparently partly washed out during Hurricane Odile, though that route could be improved to facilitate access.

6.2.2. Jackie recommended against awarding legal easements. Our entrance route is just a single lane and poorly visible to traffic along the paved road. Liability could be incurred from accidents involving, e.g., cyclists or hunters, and road improvements might be required of us if an easement were to be formally granted. Further, the former Willy properties could eventually be further divided among multiple owners, to whom the easement would then transfer. There is an additional alternate route, but Ted Troller has donated a portion of his property to the Historical Society, and legal access via that route would require independent easements from him, the Society and (for a slim wedge) Portal Rescue.

6.2.3. Jackie advanced a motion, seconded by Carolyn, to decline the requested legal easement, and the vote was unanimously supportive of rejecting the easement.

6.3. Use of the new helipad by a pickleball ‘club’ (sport described here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqLRRNOpe8U>)

6.3.1. Painting of the center court (green lined in white) as a pickleball court would help to center helicopters during landings. Between uses, equipment (net, paddles, ball) would be stored in a locker near the fire bay.

6.3.2. Concerns included liability waivers and a possible need to notify helicopter companies.

6.3.3. Victor will provide a standard waiver form, with one copy to remain at Portal Rescue.

6.3.4. Victor moved to allow the helipad to be used by pickleball club members who have signed waivers, and Susanne seconded his motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

7. For the Good of the Order

7.1. Blood drives

7.1.1. We collected 27 units of blood on March 19.

7.1.2. The next blood drive will be held on Thursday, May 13, with 17 of 30 slots already filled.

7.2. Online meeting tool

Beginning with our next meeting, we will have to choose a new meeting tool, because webex (which has previously cost nothing through Cary's company) will have a new per-use cost. Cary will investigate whether we might use another local organization's underutilized Zoom contract, and if not, will look into costs of alternatives. Given that we meet just in alternate months, a monthly fee may serve us better than an annual contract. Perhaps we can use Google Meets.

7.3. We will have to have a ribbon-cutting (and a party!) at the helipad when Victor returns.

8. Elections

8.1. Votes were held for board members representing both active members (elected by active members only) and community members (elected by both community members and active members).

8.2. Active members of the Board will include EMT Carolyn Nordstrom and firefighter Victor Shawe, as well as (automatically) the EMS and Fire Chiefs (Jackie Lewis and David Newton).

8.3. Community members will include Cary Booth, Dinah Davidson and Ali Morse.

8.4. All votes were favorable and unanimous, and each board member will continue in the offices s/he formerly held (see below).

8.5. Susanne Apitz will continue to cover the Treasurer's duties until Ali Morse returns in very early April. Many thanks to Susanne for stepping forward last fall when we urgently needed her as Treasurer.

Portal Rescue Board (elected March 20, 2021)

President: Cary Booth

EMS Chief: Jackie Lewis

Vice-President: Victor Shawe

Fire Chief: David Newton

Treasurer: Ali Morse

Secretary: Diane W ('Dinah') Davidson

Member at Large: Carolyn Nordstrom

Appendix A

Chiricahua Community Health Centers, Inc. (CCHCI) gave a presentation concerning the services they can provide (indeed, already are providing) to rural communities within the County. As a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), their eight mobile units, nine stationary clinics and 350 employees, enable them to reach patients who are poorly served either because of their isolated locations, or their inability to afford insurance and medical/dental care. Their unusual business model enables FQHCs to look actively for people who need help and serve them both year round and holistically, with attention to food and housing needs as well as primary medical care emphasizing illness prevention. Vaccinations, Covid tests, and pharmacological deliveries are also possible, and if necessary, mobile units can further reduce transport barriers by serving patients at their homes.

The 1965 Civil Rights Act defined access to primary care as a civil right for everyone, and the FQHCs continue to have bipartisan support. Health services are available independently of citizenship status, and unlike other government provided services like food stamps (covered by the Public Charge Rule), they do not 'count against' non-citizens who may eventually desire to apply to become legal permanent residents. Infectious diseases are not selective in their hosts, and entire communities benefit from protecting us all from scourges like TB. (Dinah's observation: One can imagine that our geographic area will eventually also be exposed to emerging diseases such as dengue, chikungunya, zika, etc. The Copper Queen Clinic in Douglas already sports signage warning of these diseases.)

The whole of Cochise County is considered to be composed of 'high needs communities', and one in four county residents uses CCHCI services. Until now, this non-profit organization, governed by a community board comprised of users they serve, has had no presence on the east side of the Chiricahuas. The organization, which already serves 30,000 people in 110,000 visits/yr, hopes to gradually expand in our area, including also San Simon. In each new area, they typically start by parking one of their mobile units at the local fire station for one or two days per week and gradually increase their presence, eventually moving into a stationary clinic. They are constantly searching for medical personnel willing to become involved at isolated locations, and they could eventually provide training and jobs with benefits for residents living nearby. At other locations, they have trained community health workers (lay health care providers, with no formal education) in specific skill sets, e.g., contact tracing. Such individuals understand the local culture and have credibility in their respective communities. If they were to locate here in Portal, they would be willing to see NM patients as well, though CCHCI cannot accept NM Medicaid, and NM residents are already served by the Animas clinic.

Over 700,000 patients are served by FQHCs in AZ. Treatment costs are on a sliding scale, depending on household income and family size, and for households at less than 200% of poverty level, a minimum fee of \$10 is imposed. The primary source of income for the organization is billed insurance, and CCHCI has never lost money. It is growing and constantly building new teams.

With Frances Grill's support, CCHCI would like to start in Portal by filling gaps in the Walker Clinic's services. The Walker clinic has limited hours, on limited days, and does not accept uninsured patients

or all types of insurance. CCHCI would continuously assess local needs and eventually be able to serve as a medical home, with consistent personnel over time offering regular screenings, acute care, and other primary care services, but not urgent care. Appointments would be required, but time would also be saved for same day care. Tele-help would also be available Monday through Saturday and Sunday through Saturday for pediatric patients. A doctor would be available 24/7 for advice.

CCHCI would seek an MOU with Portal Rescue to station a self-contained mobile unit here 1-2 days per week (perhaps overnighting) and use of space and restrooms. Space would be rented at a nominal cost, and their personnel would monitor spacing in a low volume waiting area (appointments every 30 min) and would clean the facility afterwards.

The Portal Rescue Board will continue to discuss this electronically, and CCHCI could start with a needs assessment in the Portal-Rodeo area as early as the coming summer. They are actively looking for personnel (perhaps birders?!) to locate here.

Presentations were made by the following individuals:

Dr. Jonathan Melk, MD, FAAP, CEO, pediatrician

Dr. Darlene Melk – Director of Mobile Programs, MD, FAAP, pediatrician

Susan Lange RN, BSN – Director of Community Programs (community outreach)

Go to <https://cchci.org/> for website – lists all hours and clinics, operations.