

Portal Rescue, Inc., Board Meeting: Minutes, October 21, 2009

1.0 Call to Order

President Bill Wilbur called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. All board members except Cheri Greenwade were present, and three attending community members included Maya Decker, Barbara Miller and Bob Morse, all from Portal.

2.0 Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted by a unanimous vote after the addition of two items from David (see 7.1 and 7.2).

3.0 Acceptance/Correction of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on September 16, 2009, were approved after section 4.1 was amended to read: Bill Miller (President of the Cochise County EMS Council) will continue forwarding materials regarding training. The final sentence in the former version of the paragraph was omitted.

4.0 Reports

4.1 President's report (Bill Wilbur)

Bill has been busy working with Karen on the website (see below). He congratulated all who participated in Sunday's (October 18) three evening EMT calls. He will try to get PR forms scanned into MSWord format sometime soon.

4.2 Treasurer's report (Rick Beno)

Our one large outstanding (\$15,000+) grant was reimbursed in October, and another \$650+ in donations has come in. We also received payment for participation in the second Skeleton fire. The Historical Society paid us rent for classroom use. We incurred some expenses for the second Skeleton fire and for the radio operations paging system. So far this year, we've received \$ 92,898 in revenues and expended \$ 71,776. Funds in our checking account now total \$26,872; it is good to have some liquidity to cover insurance bills coming due. We continue awaiting word on whether our \$3,100 in fines (incurred due to a filing delay during Board turnover) will be waived by the IRS. We will also request waiver of any fines for 2008 taxes, which Larry Moss has now completed for us. They were due on May 15, but we filed late because this was not stated on the forms.

Payment for one fire is still outstanding.

PR received a "thank you" note from the Armbrusters for use of tables and chairs in their wedding ceremony.

Rick has updated expense forms, which the Board reviewed and approved at this meeting. Maya requested that digital files of these forms be emailed to all EMTs and fire-fighters so they can print them out themselves.

4.3 EMS chief (Jeff Gee)

Sunday night was the first time PR ever had three medical call-outs on the same day/evening. Jeff commented that EMTs and RCOs did a great job, and he noted again that one never knows how calls evolve over time.

Jackie just recertified and had to do this in Tucson, since her certification was out of synchrony with those of others. She will look into the possibility of bringing an instructor here to deliver a certification course to the others. The cost would be \$200 per person, for a 15-person minimum, but even if we have just 8 attendees for national recertification in February or early March, we would come out ahead compared to paying hotel, food costs, etc., to do certifications elsewhere. We currently have 10 EMTs, with three on temporary leave (see below).

EMTs met last Saturday, discussed H1N1, took the vehicles out for checks and checked 911 and dispatch.

Maya asked whether we sponsored a vaccination clinic for the regular flu this season. The clinic was done in Rodeo this year. The one nurse receptive to coming out to Portal has moved, and there is not enough response in our small community to attract someone else to our area.

4.4 Fire chief (David Newton)

There have been no fire calls since the last board meeting. A training session was held last Saturday, and we learned a lot.

4.5 Report on open meeting/public records law session (Kris Stone)

On behalf of PR, Kris (and Larry) Stone recently attended a very useful session on open meeting / public interest law. Held in Sierra Vista, the meeting offered opportunities to hear from Elizabeth Hill (Arizona Ombudsman – Citizens' Aide office in Phoenix), and to interact with lots of attorneys, who were great resources. The office of the Ombudsman also produces a monthly educational newsletter, *The Public Law*, to which individuals may subscribe.

Kris reported tonight on matters that had previously come up at PR board meetings. She noted that, in some cases, requirements of open meeting law (OML) can conflict with Robert's Rules of Order.

- (1) Minutes of the meeting, or a recording thereof, must be made available within 72 hrs, unless our by-laws specifically waive this requirement.
- (2) If emails go out to a quorum of board members, and if responding emails are also circulated to a quorum of board members, this activity constitutes a "meeting", and must be included in the minutes. All of the individual board members may respond to a single individual (e.g., the President) without their responses constituting a "meeting".
- (3) Meeting announcements must specifically invite public attendance. (We already do this.) This requirement should also be added to our policy book.
- (4) The policy book should specifically document the procedure for maintaining and retaining records.
- (5) Letters to the Board are public records and are not confidential. (Our procedure for handling letters was finalized at the August meetings [ref. July and August minutes], and this decision too should be added to the policy book now in preparation.)
- (6) The fundamental voting rights of all board members can only be abridged, e.g., in cases of conflict of interest, if such restriction is spelled out in the bylaws.

The discussion following Kris' presentation focused on whether or not we are required to follow AZ OML. Rick noted that, e.g., in the case of (6) above, AZ OML conflicts with corporate meeting law. In the past, we have not considered PR to be subject to AZ OML, though we have often referenced that law in contentious situations. This policy is inconsistent, and it would be best to obtain a legal determination of our status, relative to AZ OML. Susanne moved, and Kris seconded, a proposal to retain legal council for this purpose, and the motion passed unanimously. After obtaining a decision, we may wish to revisit our bylaws to specifically state where we will not follow AZ OML. Bylaws supersede AZ Corporate Law, or AZ OML, when specifically permitted in the particular sections referenced. If there is no statement allowing bylaws to supersede the Law, then we must follow that specific law. With regard to conflict of interest, there is no allowance to supersede this law (see AZ Corporate Law, Title 10, Chapter 31, Article 2, Paragraph 10-3860), which is very specific as to the definition of "Conflict of Interest".

President Bill Wilbur thanked Kris for this valuable report, and, at the end of the board meeting, Kris distributed copies of two booklets ("Arizona Public Records Law" and "The Arizona Open Meeting Law") to each board member.

5.0 Old Business

5.1 November EMS luncheon

Plans for the EMS luncheon on November 18 are moving forward, with Chris Wilbur taking major responsibility. Chris has had many responses from people interested in helping, but would appreciate any additional volunteers. We still expect approximately 60 attendees, and ~\$180-190 in funds are available on PR's Walmart gift card. Receipts for purchases should be turned in to Rick. Susanne moved and Jackie seconded a proposal that the Board authorize up to \$300 in spending for this event.

The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. PR benefits many times over by receiving favors, supplies, etc., from county EMS organizations.

5.2 Donation solicitations

There was brief discussion regarding how to increase PR's visibility in the community by mail, email, and personal contact. Bob Morse urged people to take advantage of opportunities to speak personally with folks, and Bill said he would be out doing so. Bill will determine whether Alicia Davidson is still giving out hospitality packets to new people. Kris suggests that we start by asking community members what they think we're doing well versus poorly. She has brochures displayed at Quailway Cottage and said that PR is the kind of organization that could attract new people to the community. She also volunteered to host a "PR table" at the upcoming Oktoberfest, where she would both distribute materials and do blood sugar tests with supplies that are nearing their expiration date.

Thanks Kris! Susanne urged people to be proactive in identifying new residents in their neighborhoods, as well as in talking with local realtors. Joan Jensen may also be able to alert us to new neighbors. The PR brochure needs to be redone, particularly since it has the old (2222) phone number. If this is done soon, we can add the web address and suggest that people "check in periodically" until the site (already up) is fully developed. Bill has a personal friend who will redesign the brochure at cost. (The last printing of the now outdated brochure cost \$175 for 500 copies)

5.3 PR Website

Bill has given all our email addresses to Karen, who will contact us individually with our passwords. Bill passed around pages from site. Board members should call Karen (558-0180) with any questions. It was mentioned that the Newsletter should be finished and ready to post at [the Portal Rescue site](#) in late January.

5.4 Updating of EMT, FF, and RCO lists

Rick has handled this. Geoff Bender and Walter Schoepfle are currently on "stand-by", and Bonnie Sites is on medical leave.

6.0 New Business (none)

7.0 Addenda

. 7.1 Request for board approval of grant award

PR was awarded \$6,613 as a 90/10 grant (\$4,400 in training, \$450 for supplies, and remainder in equipment). The new funds must be spent by March 31, 2010, though extensions are relatively easy to obtain. This award is separate from the previously accepted VFA (50/50) grant which contains \$400 for radio things, and the remainder for equipment. David moved that the Board accept the funds, and Jeff seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Rick moved that our budget be modified to be consistent with the two new grants. Dinah seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

8.0 For the Good of the Order

8.1 Increased fire danger due to widespread oak die-back

Dinah reported on widespread dieback of certain oak species (including at least Emory oaks) in lower Cave Creek Canyon, Paradise, and the Peloncillos. We do not yet know whether a disease is killing the oaks or whether, at the lower edge of species' distributions, drought kills trees subsequently invaded by wood-boring insects. One possibility is infection by goldspotted oak borers, apparently native here and capable of killing live trees. Diseased trees have tell-tale markings on their lower trunks: seeping (brown/black) wounds, often located near insect holes. USFS biologists are expected to visit on October 30, and more should then be known about both disease agents and how wood from the numerous fallen and falling trees should be managed.

There is great concern about increased fire danger due to suddenly higher fuel loads, but also concern about transporting disease agents (insects, fungi) elsewhere in firewood. Conditions appear especially dangerous on private lands: 8 trees over 1 acre on one property, and a dozen over 2-3 acres on a second property. Dinah sought advice about how to safely dispose of accumulating brush. Portal has

no specific burn site available, and the advice given was to find community members interested in cutting fallen wood for firewood and also agreeing to cart away the brush remaining after tree-falls. PR no longer receives grant funding for fuels reduction at the forest-urban interface, but Jeff will send Dinah information on the state grants program so that she can determine whether emergency funding might be available.

8.2 Passing of Devorie Griffiths

Devorie Griffith was a long-time PR member, with responsibilities ranging from president to dispatcher. She played a key role in both the development and evolution of PR. Bob Morse announced that she recently passed away unexpectedly at a young age and after a brief illness, and he suggested that PR should do something to recognize her many contributions to the organization. It was decided that Devorie's name be added to a plaque recognizing an "honor role" of major contributors; a photograph of the plaque would then be sent to Devorie's husband Russ. We will also ask Doug Julian to prepare a one-of-a kind award certificate honoring Devorie's role in PR. Jeff also passed around (for signatures) a card to be sent to her family.

8.3 Likely cancellation of November 18th meeting

Next month's meeting is scheduled to take place on the same day as the EMS luncheon and a monthly Sew What meeting. Because monthly meetings are not required of PR, it was decided to skip that meeting and hold the next meeting in December. If something very important comes up in November, we can always schedule a meeting on a different date. Bill will monitor the need for such a meeting.

9.0 Adjournment

President Bill Wilbur adjourned the meeting at 7:55 pm.