

## **Portal Rescue, Inc., Board Meeting: Minutes, March 17, 2010**

### **1.0 Call to Order**

President Bill Wilbur called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. Attending board members were Susanne Apitz, Rick Beno, Dinah Davidson, Jeff Gee, Jackie Lewis, David Newton, Kristine Stone, and Bill Wilbur. Cheri Greenwade was absent. Active members in attendance included Debbie Anbinder, Susanne Apitz, Rick Beno, Jeff Gee, Jackie Lewis, and David Newton. Attending from the community were Karen and John Allen, Vicki Beno, Delane and René Blondeau, Maya Decker, Marvin Goldfogel, Gerry Hernbrode, Janice Hurd, JoAnn and Doug Julian, Barbara Miller, Bob Morse, Reed Peters, Don and Jean Wadsworth, Jeanne Williams, Mary Willy, and Richard and Francis Zweifel.

### **2.0 Adoption of Agenda**

The agenda was adopted by a unanimous vote (Jackie moved, Susanne seconded) after adding, as an agenda item, Delane Blondeau's concerns about contacting PR EMTs directly (see sections 4.3 and 7.1).

### **3.0 Acceptance/Correction of Minutes**

February minutes were accepted by unanimous vote (Susanne moved, Rick seconded) after Maya's notation of two typos.

### **4.0 Reports**

#### **4.1 President's report (Bill Wilbur)**

Bill summarized several of the successful year's main issues and events.

- The RCO program is up and running smoothly.
- *Per diem* allowances were updated to meet current costs.
- The new PR website was launched in October, though it remains a work in progress.
- Donation solicitations were discussed in September, but the matter remains unresolved. Problems with fundraisers (see **5.1**), and effects of the economic downturn on grant availability, may require looking more to donations for support.
- PR hosted the County Chiefs' Meeting for a Thanksgiving feast in November. Attendees were very satisfied with the luncheon.
- In December, PR acquired an upgraded replacement for Brush 6 at very little cost.
- The 2009 budget was reviewed in January as the 2010 budget was put together.
- In February, some changes (see **6.1**) were proposed to By-Laws.
- There was much discussion of the need to alert local folks that, despite the need to call 911 in emergencies, PR receives no 911 funding and still needs community support.
- The PR Honor Roll plaque has been updated to include the names of Janet Gee and Devorie Griffiths. It will be displayed in a prominent place.
- PR would appreciate notification, at least 24 hrs in advance, of any intention of local residents to burn brush. Messages can be left on the PR phone line (558-2206), which Bill Wilbur calls each morning. Today, Brush 9 and Tender 1 launched unnecessarily because neighbors (and PR) did not know that a rancher was (carefully) burning brush. Bill closed by thanking the two Chiefs for their excellent service, and the community for its support.

#### **4.2 Treasurer's report (Rick Beno)**

Rick summarized the very successful 2009 budgetary year.

- Year 2009 ended with assets of \$90,651, as compared with \$48,321 at the close of 2008. We more than reached our goal of ending the year with funds to cover annual expenses on a 'normal' year. We were able to add \$18,789 to the Rainy Day Fund.

- Due to generally low interest rates on liquid accounts, we invested much of our assets in 'semi-liquid' CDs. (We lose just a month or quarter of interest if we need to withdraw funds early.) Some pay monthly and others quarterly, and they roll over into the funds themselves or into money market accounts. Terms of the CDs range from 18 to 60 months. The Muma funds, which we cannot spend, are now generating 2.65%.
  - In prior years, we tended to get donations from local people assisted by PR EMS personnel, but we received no such donations this year, perhaps because folks have lost the feeling of "personal attention" from PR under the new 911 system. Some or all of this type of donation may also have been given to the Jan Gee and Devorie Griffiths funds this year. One EMS donation has come in for year 2010.
  - Fire income, at approximately \$21,000 far exceeded the \$12,000 budgeted. Consequently, costs associated with fire-fighting were also higher. Most training and equipment expenses were reimbursed from grants.
  - The new dispatch and fire bar systems increased phone costs some, and insurance costs were a little over budget in 2009. Phone expenses will rise again in 2010 with acquisition of DSL for PR Base.
  - Thanks to Bob Walton (!) for saving us considerable expense to fix a potentially catastrophic problem with the water tank.
  - Thanks to Don Wadsworth and Bob Dearing for finishing the walls of the RCO office.
  - No grant money has yet come in during 2010, but we anticipate receiving some after our expenses have been submitted.
  - We expect just \$15,000 in donations in 2010, or less than received in 2009, when the Jan Gee fund and a donation from the (disbanding) Stateline Samaritans contributed substantial one-time funding.
  - — Recent (2010) EMS training came at a substantially reduced cost because the training was held here, and Jackie (thanks!) provided lodging and food for the instructors.
  - Historically, fundraisers have met about half of our expenses (but see below). Fire income is more erratic, ranging from \$0 to over \$40,000 annually.
- Rick's presentation was greeted with spontaneous and enthusiastic applause in recognition of his successful efforts to get PR finances organized and on good footing.

#### **4.3 EMS chief (Jackie Lewis)**

Jackie recently replaced Jeff as Fire Chief.

- We have had one call (today) since the last board meeting. We need to remind the community that PR is dispatched quickly when a call goes out to 911 in Bisbee and is relayed to Douglas. We typically arrive much earlier than Douglas. The caller should be certain to give his/her name, address, and phone number, and describe the situation. We will be contacted automatically. We have a great EMS team, and our service has not changed since PR moved to the new dispatch system.
- Some community members have contacted (or are tempted to contact) PR members directly, e.g., when they think they need just a 'lift assist' after a fall, or are not sure whether their conditions are serious enough to warrant a 911 call. However, our EMTs cannot respond to direct contacts because of liability considerations; they are only covered when officially dispatched after a 911 call. Additionally, injuries can occur during falls, and EMTs are better trained than neighbors or fire-fighters to recognize such injuries. Rick noted that residents can ask that Douglas not respond until a request is made by dispatched PR personnel.
- Jackie noted that EMTs are still meeting monthly for training and vehicle checks. They plan to provide training for the community in new CPR techniques, know now as CCC, or Continuous Chest Compression (no mouth-to-mouth required or desirable).
- Jackie hopes also to start regular meetings for RCO training.

#### **4.4 Fire chief (David Newton)**

- Brush 9 responded to a false alarm today (Wed., March 17; see **4.1**). To date, this is the only operation of 2010.
- Four fire-fighters are current doing training in Prescott. Grants applied for in 2007 and 2008 brought reimbursement in 2009.
- Contrary to expectation, RFA and VFA grants will be available this year, and we will be submitting proposals next month.
- Dinah asked David about progress toward writing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, in order to qualify for matching funds from the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) program. USFS, AZ State Forestry, and the BLM have said they would help us with the now highly involved application process, but the responsibility for pursuing this lies with the community, not the Fire Chief. A volunteer is needed to spear-head this effort. David has a good deal of information that he could transfer to such a volunteer. Paying outside agents to write such a plan would cost about \$20,000, which could be included for reimbursement from the grant itself.

#### **5.0 Old Business**

##### **5.1 Developing problems with fundraisers (JoAnn Julian)**

JoAnn Julian presented some concerns that she raised about annual PR fundraisers at the February board meeting. These events have long contributed funding crucial to PR's annual budgets. Together, the Pie Festival, Soup Kitchen and contributions from Sew What have provided approximately \$28,000 per year. However, fundraisers have remained successful only by asking more and more of the declining numbers of individuals willing to step up and donate food and time. It has become nearly impossible to fill the shoes of leaders who have aged, moved, died, or burned out, and numbers of both willing workers and patrons have also declined. Although the Soup Kitchen will continue next year under the co-leadership of JoAnn Julian and Chris Wilbur, no one has yet assumed leadership of the Pie Festival, and there must be a pool of willing leaders and workers for either of these activities to be successful in the long term.

After discussing this issue at length, several of the former leaders believe the described trend is so strong and consistent that PR must now shift its focus from fundraisers to donations. They recommend that the Board 'buy into' this effort by organizing a committee, with representation of both board and community members, to plan and direct this change in focus. JoAnn and her colleagues suggest that we plan a month-long donation drive, culminating in the Oktoberfest, and supported by a redesigned PR brochure that presses local residents more strongly for annual donations. It is suggested that a minimum contribution be expected from every household, and that special categories of donors be associated with higher levels of contributions. Delane Blondeau suggested that a 'phone tree' be organized to contact local residents personally. For the suggested change in the focus of fundraising to be successful, efforts to raise donations must be sustained year after year.

#### **6.0 New Business**

##### **6.1 Changes to by-laws**

The Board solicited approval of active PR board members for two changes that PR Treasurer Rick Beno suggested be made to our by-laws. Two signatures are currently required on each check written by PR, and it can be difficult and time-consuming for the

Treasurer to acquire the second signature. The first suggested change would add the Secretary to the list of people authorized to sign checks. (Currently, the Secretary verifies the identities of other

officers at the bank but is not authorized to sign checks.). The Board also recommends that payment of recurring costs (e.g., phone, electric, etc.) be stream-lined by permitting a single signature – that of the Treasurer. An audit team of local residents formerly contributed to outlining duties of the Treasurer, and we could ask them to define what recurring expenses should be included. The bank itself has no interest in either of these matters, and they arise only because of existing PR by-laws. The vote, by active members only, was unanimously in favor of the two changes. Six of the voters were present, and five absent (four currently at the fire school).

## **6.2 Election of board members**

### *6.2.1 Active members*

The Board presented three nominations for three active member slots on the Board. However, one of the nominees (Jeff Gee) volunteered to withdraw his name if a replacement person could be found. Active member David Johnson expressed interest in joining the Board, so his name was placed in nomination, together with the names of Rick Beno and Susanne Apitz. Given the absence of challengers for the three positions, the six active members present at the meeting accepted this slate of candidates by acclamation.

### *6.2.2 Community members*

Currently, the four community representatives on the PR Board include Dinah Davidson, Cheri Greenwade, Kristine Stone, and Bill Wilbur, and each of these individuals has expressed interest in continuing for a second term. Additional nominations were requested from the floor, but none were made, and President Bill Wilbur closed the nominations. Given the absence of challengers for the four positions, the slate of four candidates was accepted by acclamation.

## **7.0 Addenda**

### **7.1 Possible reluctance of community residents to use the 911 option**

This matter arose earlier in the meeting and was addressed under section 4.3 above.

### **8.0 For the Good of the Order**

— As a 4-H project, Sharon Karp's children are required to design a fundraising effort in support of a worthy cause. They wish to organize a walk-a-thon to raise money for PR, though PR would not be directly involved. The timing of the proposed

event was discussed. It was suggested that any funds raised might be delivered at the Oktoberfest. However, because our own donation drive might be centered on the Oktoberfest (see above), Maya cautioned to be sure that the 4-H project would not appear

to be an alternative to direct contribution to our organization. The consensus was that the event should take place well in advance of the Oktoberfest, but that funds could be delivered to us at Oktoberfest. With that understanding, Jackie proposed

approval of the project, and Kris seconded that motion, which was supported unanimously in a vote by the Board.

— Kris asked that PR send a 'thank-you' note to Lee Palmer at Douglas Trophies which, at no cost to us, added names of Jan Gee and Devorie Griffiths to the Honor Roll plaque.

### **8.0 Adjournment**

At 8:47 pm, President Bill Wilbur asked for a motion to adjourn. Jackie's motion was seconded and adopted unanimously.

The Board met briefly in Executive Session and chose the following set of officers for 2010:

President: Bill Wilbur

Vice-President Kristine Stone

Treasurer Rick Beno  
Secretary Dinah Davidson