

Manatee County Fire Marshals Committee

Regular Meeting Minutes of April 9th, 2024
Cedar Hammock Fire Rescue Admin Building, 10am

Members Present:

Fire Marshal Rodney Kwiatkowski – WMFR
Deputy Fire Marshal Marc Massella – CHFR
Fire Marshal Chris Melser – BFD
Fire Marshal Michael Blake- EMFR
Bureau Administrator Jalex Leissler – WMFR

Members Not Present:

Deputy Fire Marshal Frank Meola – SMFR
Fire Marshal Jane Herrin – LKFD
Deputy Fire Marshal Leticia Ownbey – PFD
Fire Marshal Andrell Miller - NRFD

Guests Present:

Loretta Merrill – Development Services
Brian Johnson – Development Services
Kris Weiskopf – Development Services

1. **The meeting was called to order at 10:03am by FM Kwiatkowski. The pledge of allegiance followed the call to order.**
2. **Changes to Agenda:** *There were none.*
3. **Guest Comments/Presentations:**
 - a. **Planning/Zoning:** *Loretta Merrill spoke to the group about fire lanes and parking. She brought up that there has been quite a bit of multi-family development without enough parking. Ms. Merrill asked the committee if this is something that the building department should address in their code.*

Chair

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

Vice Chair

Deputy Fire Marshal Marc Massella
(941) 727-2076
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FM Blake suggested that these issues should be addressed with the property managers. Ms. Merrill asked if it would be beneficial to include this issue in the Land Development Code to require it for residential. FM Kwiatkowski volunteered to help Ms. Merrill edit the current LDC to address this issue.

Conversation ensued regarding parking issues.

4. Old Business:

a. Trainings:

- i. **Sprinkler Class – FM Blake:** *The committee agreed to strike this item from further agendas.*

b. County Gate Systems:

Nothing to report at this meeting.

c. Juvenile Firefighter Succession:

Southern Manatee not represented.

d. Inspector Quarterly Training:

The committee is in agreement that these should occur quarterly. This will be a separate meeting from the Fire Marshals Committee. FM Kwiatkowski nominated Inspector Josh Adkins to lead these meetings. The committee agreed. The first meeting will be August 20th, 2024 at 10am at West Manatee Fire Rescue Administration Headquarters.

e. Mobile Food Vendors:

FM Kwiatkowski passed out a copy of the MFV inspection checklist his inspectors have been using. He explained that future iterations will have a signature box at the bottom. DFM Massella suggested that every department use their own checklist. FM Melsner informed the committee that if anyone wanted access to BFDs OneDrive for inspections, they should reach out to Inspector Adam Casteel.

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f. MCFCA Fee Schedule

- i. **New Proposed Fee Schedule:** *FM Kwiatkowski informed the group that the Manatee County Fire Chiefs Association has voted to accept the committee's suggested alterations to the fee schedule. The MCFCA is working to have the new fee schedule take effect on October 1st, 2024.*

5. New Business

- a. **Fireworks:** *FM Blake posed a question to the committee about lead time for firework display permits. He recounted a recent instance in his district where he felt he was not given proper time to prepare for the display. Conversation ensued regarding this subject and the committee agreed to put this item on the next agenda.*
- b. **Spec Homes:** *FM Kwiatkowski, at the request of Sarasota Fire Departments FM Anita Blake, opened a conversation about reviewing the plans for spec homes. FM Kwiatkowski spoke briefly about the difference between model homes and spec homes as he understands it. The committee agrees that they treat model homes like businesses and inspect them. DFM Massella pointed out that companies often use model homes as an office, and therefore they need to be inspected as a business.*

Kris Weiskopf pointed out that sometimes companies use spec homes as a loophole. Companies are only allowed to use 10% of their planned construction as model homes, so often they will build spec homes (which can be built before plats have been established) and use them as model homes.

Loretta Merrill pointed out the uncertainty that spec homes may or may not be being used as a model home and it is difficult to discern most times.

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FM Kwiatkowski asked the group what this all means. The group concluded that either way there must be access and water to the structures, but it is not in their jurisdiction to review plans for spec homes.

FM Melser initiated discussion about townhomes and how, if the proper fire rating between units, it is technically classified as apartments and should be inspected.

- c. **Dialers:** *FM Melser spoke about a company who is using a dialer that bounces radio signals from one building to another. It is called a mesh network.*

6. Department Reports:

- a. **North River Fire Department:** *Not represented*
- b. **Southern Manatee Fire & Rescue:** *Not represented.*
- c. **East Manatee Fire & Rescue:** *FM Blake noted that there has been a rise in instances of working without a permit in his district.*
- d. **Parrish Fire Department:** *Not represented*
- e. **Cedar Hammock Fire Rescue:** *DFM Massella has just submitted a grant application to acquire 1,500 smoke alarms. These alarms are needed for CHFRs new CR program.*
- f. **West Manatee Fire Rescue:** *FM Kwiatkowski told the committee that WMFR has been busy with vacation rental inspections and that the first round of compliance letters have been sent to TPLE owners.*

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- g. **Bradenton Fire Department:** *FM Melser spoke about the Brycer software that BFD has been using since November. It is a third party program that informs owners when their fire suppression systems are due for certification.*
- 7. **Next Meeting:** *May 14th, 2024 at 10am- WMFR.*
- 8. **The meeting was adjourned at 11:10am by FM Kwiatkowski.**

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