



## **BERRIEN COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION**

**Call to Order:** 0830-0953

**Date:** June 16, 2016

**Old minutes:** Old minutes emailed out. Motion to accept old minutes and seconded. Motion passed. None opposed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Checking \$3454.94

Motion to accept treasurer's report and seconded. Motion passed. None opposed.

**Communications/Bills:** Firefighter 1/2 class graduated last month. 19 Challenge coins given to graduates. Plaque for retiring Chief Larry Klug. Motion to pay for plaque and seconded. Motion passed. None opposed. Retirement gathering for Chief Klug on June 24, 1900. Baroda Twp. Park.

**New Chief/Visitor:** Bill Whitney new Watervliet Fire Chief.

**Committee Report:**

**Sheriff:** None

**Great Lakes Drone:** Several New hires. Six thermal drones. Three response units. 4580 staged at North Berrien Fire. 4581 will be soon be staged in Kalamazoo. 4582 staged at Chikaming Twp. Fire. All three units have thermal and underwater capabilities. Also, now have a boat. Request early for water rescue. See attached report.

**Red Cross:** Representatives Bella and Mary gave presentation on what Red Cross does for people that experiences a fire. Also had a representative from Americorps. Have responded to 150 fires so far this year. Discussion on who qualifies for Red Cross assistance. Fires, storm damage, CO events that prevent residents from returning to their home within 48hours qualifies for Red Cross assistance. Power outages do not qualify. Minor damage does not qualify. No homeless sheltering. Specialize in immediate assistance. First 2-3 days. Has a recovery team that reaches out in 2-3 days. Provide financial assistance, temporary lodging, mental health assistance, emotional and spiritual assistance, medical equipment and medication assistance. Fatality assistance both human and pet. First responders/dispatch can contact Red Cross at 1-833-583-3111. This number is exclusive to first responder/dispatch. Discussed the Home fire program It is a fire education and smoke alarm program. Fire departments can partner with Red Cross in a smoke alarm program. Red Cross can send information on smoke alarm installs to partner fire departments as well as provide fire education information. If you have a smoke alarm installation program, Red Cross would complement your smoke alarm installation does not replace your program. Chief Davidson expressed Red Cross always welcome at our meetings and has spot on agenda.

**Dispatch/911:** **Reminder VHF system will be dismantled by end of 2022.** AT&T rates increasing substantially. With virtually everyone on 800 paging dispatch will be discontinuing back up paging on VHF. By dropping the VHF back up connections there will be an approximate savings of \$100,000.00. Only agencies still on VHF paging are S.M.C.A.S, Sodus Fire, and Pride Care. Trying to get dates for them to switch over. Want to transition the last three departments as soon as possible to reduce dispatching errors. We started transitioning departments to 800 paging in June 2020, so now have been on 800 paging for a year. Thank you to all that have already transitioned over to 800 paging. Discussed signal coverage testing. Reported issues with 800 over the past few weeks. Foliage and weather causing issues. Caitlin reached out to the techs to look into the problem as well. Remember no system has 100 percent coverage. EOC and commissioners meeting tomorrow. We have submitted for appropriations funding for tower in south eastern county. Caitlin has many letters of support from Chiefs, State, and County partners as well. Feel free to express support to Senator Peters office as well. Motorola drawing up a formal proposal for a new tower. Otherwise possible increase to surcharges depending on upcoming FCC rules. Reminder of the low interest loan from the county to purchase radios. Some departments have already taken advantage of the loan program. No news on the radio grant. No new awards since June 11, 2021. Consider speaking with boards and elected leadership on using Municipal American

Rescue Plan Funds for radios. Webinar regarding the American Rescue Plan tomorrow. Depends on the spin you place on the request.

Active911 delays. When unit placed in CAD it sends the Active911. Have experienced timeouts with Active911 and cell coverage. Use caution on just relying on cell phones. Two new dispatchers starting next week. Three in training. Still have three openings. New IS working with Denny during the transition. Denny retiring from dispatch end of July 2021. Reminder that Mutual Aid changes need to go through Jennifer or Caitlin. GLD getting more mutual aid agreements. Mutual aid setup: Water rescues are automatic. Structure fires are different. Due to the way structure fires are categorized, anywhere from smell of smoke in house to flames through the roof, these are requests come from command. Search and rescue are also command request. Structure fire auto aid cannot be changed to confirmed structure only. Auto aid is classified as all dispatched at same time. Caitlin only has three agencies updated boxcards so far. Anyone needing help contact Gerry Kableman and/or Ted Chase.

**DNR:** None

**Funeral:** In North Berrien vehicle on way back to Berrien Springs

**Emergency Management:** Discussion on ARP American Rescue Plan. Read what you have available and bring requests to your local boards. Caution on peer review of what others have done. Do your due diligence and research. Still updating mitigation plan. Currently threat risk and hazard assessment. Would like at least one survey from each municipality. Survey due July 01, 2021. Will send out reminders. DC Cook exercise. Hostile action based exercise. FEMA not able to travel. Attempted a drill via zoom over two days. FEMA did not accept that. Back to a normal exercise. Drill July 27, 2021. Drill August 24, 2021. Graded exercise September 21, 2021. Trying to get as many elements for Covid-19 as possible. Response to Covid-19 and parallel correlation to nuclear emergency. Reduces the participation element as well. Discussion on Covid supply tracking. Software that was used did not meet the tracking needs on Emergency management. Looking at other software options for supply/resource management. Looking to get a platform that will work with response/supply tracking/training, etc.... Discussion on possibility of Emergency reporting being a capable platform to use.

**EMS:**

**Medic-1:** Everything going well. Still operating under COVID-19 status.

**S.M.C.A.S.:** None, No new representative.

**Med Flight:** Open for LZ/fly in classes. Available for calls. Please fill out after call surveys. Want to improve operations and will get swag as well. Chief Meyers asked question on LZ. Wind direction was variable. Question on five cones. Mark said four cones is great.

**Med Control:** Averaging seven lockdowns a month so far this year. Gunshots main cause for lockdowns.

**LEPC:** Has not met. Zoom Seminar June 27, 2021. Zoom link Will go out to members. Open meeting in September.

**BCFA:** Resource directory update coming soon. Last meeting at fairgrounds. Had a quarm. SJDPS brought out new tower. Larry Klug retirement gathering June 24, 2021. Planning on full education center for fair this year. Would like 1-2 members from each department. June 18, 2022 moving Lane automotive car show to soccer field in ST Joe Twp. Looking for sponsors. Funds raised during this event are shared between Sheriff Association and Berrien County Firefighters Association. More details to come.

**Training:** None. 19 graduated in FF 1 and 2 class. BHDPS FF 1&2 class has started.

**HazMat:** no report.

**MITRT5:** MITRT 5 trained in Kalamazoo June 03-05, 2021. SAR and rope rescue training. Next scheduled training in Niles August 07-08 and 28-29.

**MABAS:** boxcards: Get updated boxcards to dispatch by July 01, 2021. Tabletop drill July 14, 2021 Crew Transport Boxcard drill. POD drill August 11, 2021. Crew Transport POD drill. Chikaming up for next POD drill?

**Old Business:** Grant...No news on the grant Please stay current with NIFRS reporting.

**New Business:** Chief Myers discussed the Michigan fire plan grant. If need information on grant Get in touch with Chief Myers. [firechief@oronokotwnshop.org](mailto:firechief@oronokotwnshop.org). anything that has to do with fire prevention. Was able to get tablet for preplanning. Chief Myers working on getting the accountability app for the tablet back up and running. Working with Western Michigan computer Science Program to get app back up and running. Parameters for the app: No cost for the app. Easily upgradable. Web based app. If interested in beta testing let Chief Myers know and he will send you a link to the beta test.

Sandra Dyja with the First Responder Taskforce, the first responder insurance plan, will be at the July 2021 meeting

**Next Meeting:** July 21, 2021 at 0830. Lincoln Twp.

**Adjourn:** 0953 hrs.





**American  
Red Cross**

**SW MI Disaster Action Team**  
Serving Allegan, Berrien, Branch,  
Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph  
and Van Buren County

SW Michigan Chapter  
5640 Venture Ct  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009  
Tel ~~(660) 353-6180~~  
Tel (800) 733-2767

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

*on-STAR 833-583-3111*

# GREAT LAKES DRONE COMPANY, LLC

## UAS REPORT

EMERGENCY SERVICES DIVISION

### June 2021

#### Call Volume Report

- Total Calls 2021: 55
- Calls Since Last Meeting to Date: 14
- Calls in Berrien County 2021 to Date: 21

#### Breakdown of Type of Calls 2021 to Date

- Missing Persons - 21
- LEO Assists - 9
- Structure Fires - 18
- Water/Dive Rescue - 6

#### Updates

- New Full time Public Safety Director: Lindsay Nitz. Business cards coming soon.
- We have hired On Call Public Safety positions and are currently training more. All staff have ID badges.
- Chikaming has MOU and we now will auto respond.
- Equipment update:
  - o 4582 now housed at Chikaming Township, 4581 to Kalamazoo
  - o New Boat to assist with our ops on water operations: has night lighting systems.
  - o 3 new thermal drone additions
- o Reminder, early activation makes everything easier on all of us, we would rather disregard then be behind possible opportunities to intervene at the right timeline. This is especially relevant for water rescues.

#### Training Update

- MABAS Public Safety UAS Symposium at Watervliet Airport on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021
- Training with Kalamazoo and surrounding K9 division was held on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021, which covered integrating live drone feeds and assistance into field use.
- Contact us by email at [Lindsay@greatlakesdronecompany.com](mailto:Lindsay@greatlakesdronecompany.com) to schedule a training with us.

2618 W. John Beers Road, Stevensville, MI 49127

888-816-9625 - [info@greatlakesdronecompany.com](mailto:info@greatlakesdronecompany.com)