Minutes 3-9-2021

Meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. and Incident Commander Holtby welcomed those
attending, as well as those who were on their very first GP-CERT virtual call. Holtby advised that in the absence of orientation sessions for newcomers, the Command Team is available for questions by telephone, text, or email at any time (and that all of their contact
information is listed on the GP-CERT.org web-site)

An agenda will be provided several days in advance of future meetings. Updates were
provided on the following:

1. Congratulations were offered to Tom Porada, our Communications Officer, and Mitch
Farrah, our Deputy Incident Commander, on their recent election to the GP Board.
2. ‘The GP Responder’ newsletter has published three issues. Thanks were given to all
those volunteers and contributors who have helped so far. A request was made for
100-150 word articles to be submitted for future issues, as we had to cut back on our
original goal of publishing every two months to once every three months due to lack
of content. Next issue is scheduled for publication in May, and we also plan to start
profiling one member of the Command Team in each issue.
3. Holtby spoke last week with Chief Karl Bennett of North Port Fire Rescue - Division
Chief for Emergency Medical Services. Two things came out of that discussion:
• He is looking for 5-10 GP-CERT volunteers who would be willing to help out
each day for their next COVID-19 Moderna vaccination clinic. It likely would be
held in 1-2 weeks time, and would be held at a site close to North Port City Hall.
Our volunteers would not be administering the vaccine, but would help out
with traffic, directing people with appointments to the appropriate areas, and
keeping them moving along in an orderly fashion through the process. Four
hour shifts are what Bennett advised are likely to be required, and volunteers
will have as strong likelihood of being vaccinated at the end of each day should
there be excess doses available, which was the case during their prior event.
• Commencing March 15 th , Florida will be lowering the COVID-19 vaccine
eligibility age to 60 years old.
• As a result, GP-CERT volunteers over 60 years of age, preferably those who
have not yet been vaccinated would be preferred, as NPFR does not want any
excess vaccine at the end of each clinic day to go to waste. Bennett advised that
he can make no promises that there will be vaccine available at the end of the
day, although it is highly likely. If you are interested in helping North Port Fire
Rescue out with their next clinic, please send me an email or text. Preference
for clinics will be given to GP-CERT volunteers over 60 first, and then to
volunteers under 60 who have not yet been vaccinated.
• Chief Bennett also advised that NPFR still has 7,000 masks available for
distribution. A ‘show of hands’ vote was taken on our call whether to do
another ‘mask-distribution’ event, and the response was to move forward with
it. Ed Litcher has graciously agreed to once again coordinate this event, and he

will set a date and time, and it will be communicated to the team along with a
request for volunteers to assist.

1. Trent DePersia, one of our Recruitment Committee chairmen, then provided an
excellent update on recruitment strategy. Trent discussed key items of the
Committee’s strategy: Voluntary participation and open to all residents; the
continuing need for volunteers in each of the teams – Damage Assessment, Access
Control, Communications, Triage/Basic First Aid, and Administration (scribes,
newsletter articles, logistics, training, recruitment, etc); and getting new residents
awareness of the team improved at orientation meetings. Volunteers will be assigned
to areas based on needs, desires, skills, and experience. No prior experience
necessary and training is available. Trent advised that the key is to have all
volunteers spreading the word to neighbors and friends, have a robust web-site, and
also to have GP-CERT pamphlets in the clubhouse.
2. Trent then introduced his daughter, Kristi Loret. Kristi discussed taking the CERT
Train-the-Trainer classes recently, and how that sets GP-CERT up nicely to do our
own training once things open back up. Kristi stressed the need for regular training,
and recommended having an Education and Training Committee set up to handle
this. Kristi was willing to spearhead this effort, as long as other volunteers helped.
She would like to see CERT Basic training classes twice a year in GP, initially starting
out with one. Still to be determined would be format, as there are a number of
different options available to us. Kristi also stressed the need for team-building drills
and CERT activation scenarios to better prepare GP-CERT. She also discussed the
need for training supplies and equipment, as well as additional volunteers to help out
with training (primary instructors, and supplemental instructors such as those with
firefighting experience, EMS/Nurse, and even Psychology/Survivor advocates
If you have an interest in taking a CERT basic training class, please let Kristi Loret and
Holtby know by text or email, so we can maintain an up-to-date list. Future CERT
classes will likely fill up quickly once they start to open up again, as there are a lot of
communities that are starting up training, so it is important that we are able to do
something in-house.
Holtby advised that GP-CERT has a great deal of training material available for
anyone who is interested in getting a leg up on the next CERT basic training or other
courses. We have CERT training video DVDs, divided into eight separate segments,
including such topics as Disaster Psychology, Safety in the After – Disaster
Environment, Handling Mass Casualty Situations, etc. They are 2011 vintage, but the
material is still relevant today. We have CPR lifesaving skills kits with hands-on Mini
Anne Learning Manikins. We have CERT Basic training participant manuals (30+)
available for anyone who wants to take the CERT Basic training at some time in the
future. We also have CERT Train-the-Trainer instructor guides available for anyone
who wants to take this course and help out Kristi with training our volunteers in the
future.
3. On the communications front, Tom Porada asked that we start looking at events that
allow us to practice using the talkies. Holtby requested that those Command Team
members who have radios and who are planning to help out during the mask
distribution event next month please bring their GP-CERT talkies to the event.
4. As things start to open back up around here, GP-CERT would like to do a little
fundraising, so any suggestions would be welcomed. Our Gran Paradiso cap
fundraiser was a huge success, as our volunteers sold 94 caps, making roughly $1,100
in profit to date. We still have 66 GP Core 365 Adult Pitch Performance caps (42 white
and 24 charcoal grey) left. We had been selling them pre-COVID for $20 each or two
for $35. Based on continuing that price point, we have a minimum of $1,155 in
additional profit (as all costs have been covered) once they are all sold.
5. We need a new Zone Leader for Zone 2. David Durham, the prior Zone 1 Lead, is
leaving our GP community. Kristi Loret was the prior Zone 2 Leader, but she is
switching over to be the Zone 1 Lead (as she lives in Zone 1). If anyone is interested
in being the Zone 2 Lead, please let me or Mitch Farrah know at your earliest
convenience. You do not need to have taken CERT basic training, but as long as you
have a desire to take it once things open up, that is good enough for us.
6. Holtby previously advised that Joe Wyatt, who is viewed as one of the “godfathers” of
GP-CERT, had passed away due to cancer. There is a ‘Celebration of Life’ ceremony
planned on March 21 st at 2 pm to honor Joe. There were so many people that wanted
to attend that his spouse requested that the event be “invite only”. Originally, this
was not the case. Holtby will be attending and speaking about the impact Joe had in
helping GP-CERT find our bearings, and how he raised the bar for all volunteers.
7. There were a number of questions and comments about the Board of Directors
authorization of GP-CERT and other matters.