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**Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE)**

**Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse**

**Advisory Board**

**Virtual Meeting**

**Thursday, April 10, 2025**

**1 PM to 2 PM (EST)**

**Mission Statement:** Together with the citizens of Florida, we promote the safety of children and other vulnerable populations through public and private collaborations.

 **Meeting Minutes**

 **Chairperson: Karen Mazzola**

**Welcome**

Meeting begins at 1:01 PM.

No quorum as of meeting beginning.

**Roll Call**

**FDLE Attendees:** ASAC John McClellan, Ashley Bullard, Abdel Cortez, Makenna Nix, Megan McDonald

**Board Members:** Chairperson Karen Mazzola, Mr. Dan Campbell, Ms. Stephanie White, Major Jerry (Mark) Hensley, Ms. Jessica Janasiewicz, Sheriff Walt McNeil, Ms. Hilary Sessions, Ms. Brandi Manley, Dr. Kim Spence, Mr. Mark Young, Ms. Terri Lynn, Ms. Fran Carlin-Rogers, Dr. Katherine Gomez, Captain Peter Bergstresser

**MEPIC/CART Update**

* In March, MEPIC issued 0 Amber Alerts, 7 Missing Child Alerts, 14 Silver Alerts, and 1 Purple Alert.
* CART has held tabletop exercises and attended the Amber Symposium.

**FDLE Update**

* Manager II Ashley Bullard informs the Board that she has taken a position elsewhere.
* She will be responding to some emails in place of GAII Mehgen Peoples who is on medical leave.
* Board members are reminded to email the FMCD email account (FMCD@fdle.state.fl.us) instead of GAII Peoples to ensure prompt responses. Makenna Nix will monitor that inbox and will respond to emails as well.
* The new Assistant Special Agent in Charge, John McClellan, is introduced.
* The new Florida Missing Children’s Day Foundation website ([www.fmcdf.org](http://www.fmcdf.org)) is shown, as well as the updated [MEPIC website](https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/MEPIC/Home/MEPIC-Advisory-Board).

**June In-Person Meeting Date**

* In-person meeting set for **Friday, June 13th** at the Drury Plaza Hotel located at 1690 Raymond Diehl Road in Tallahassee, Florida.
* Chairperson Mazzola reminds the board to book their rooms ahead of time to get the preferred rate.
* Further details regarding booking have been emailed to the advisory board.
* Manager II Bullard advises that the “Pay Now & Save” option is NON-REFUNDABLE and advises not to choose this option in case the meeting is cancelled.

As of 1:14 PM, no quorum has been reached. Approval for the Spring 2025 MEPICAB newsletter will be sent out for voting via Survey Monkey.

Approval for the December, February, and April meeting minutes will also be determined via Survey Monkey.

Manager Bullard shows the Board updated portions of the FDLE website including MEPIC and Foundation information.

**Spring Newsletter**

* The Spring Newsletter is ready for Board approval. Chairperson Mazzola goes through the newsletter to review each page with the board.
* Mr. Dan Campbell asks about age-progressed images used on the missing persons spotlight page. Manager II Bullard explains that most missing adults do not have age-progressed images, since NCMEC generally creates them for missing children only.
* Manager II Bullard goes over how NamUs is used as a resource in missing and unidentified persons cases.
* Members are encouraged to share the newsletter, including sharing individual pages.

**Summer Newsletter**

* Dr. Spence has submitted an article, but more articles are still needed.
* FDLE is devoting a lot of time to the Foundation in order to address short funds and will not have the time available to fill in all needed articles.
* Board members are encouraged to submit articles and to workshop with FDLE if they have an idea they feel needs refining.
* Mr. Dan Campbell suggests articles on summer safety for teens and preteens who may be alone more while school is out.
* Manager Bullard states there will likely be an article regarding legislative updates related to child safety.
* Dr. Spence suggests articles highlighting agencies that Board members are part of and how they contribute positively to missing persons issues.
* Ms. Stephanie White suggests an article about how parents can talk to their children about how to stay safe. Manager II Bullard suggests using [FDLE’s Safe Passage brochure](https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/getattachment/MEPIC/Home/Publications/Safe-Passage-Brochure-11-24.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US) as a reference.
* Ms. Stephanie White also suggests a story about a bloodhound who went from being a foster dog to a working K9 with Indian River County.

**2025 Award Nomination Update:**

* Manager II Bullard encourages submission of award nominations. Nominations for the Jimmy Ryce K9 Trailing Award have been received, but we are still looking for nominations for the other categories. Typically, we receive many nominations in the month of May.
* Board members are encouraged to push nominations for the School Bus Operator of the Year and Young Hero awards in particular. Send out forms to agencies, etc.

**2025 FMCD Update:**

* Manager II Bullard updates that FDLE is on track planning the 2025 FMCD ceremony, and are focused on fundraising for the Foundation, since prices have increased since last year in many areas.
* The National Anthem student contest (open to 1st – 8th graders) is still open until Friday, May 2nd, 2025.
* FMCD will still be held at the Tallahassee Automobile Museum this year as the Florida Capitol is still undergoing renovations. We will reach out to the Capitol again next year.

**2025 Safety Events:**

* Chairperson Mazzola reviews the safety events FDLE members are attending this year. She suggests a possible article in the newsletter highlighting these events.
	+ Manager II Bullard explains that it might be difficult to write an article stating we will be at an event if we have to cancel for any reason, but that it might be beneficial to highlight National Night Out since we attend annually.
* Ms. Stephanie White invites FDLE to contact her if we would like to have bloodhound K9s at our booth for National Night Out.
* Florida Safety Institute’s Public Safety Day is discussed, and board members are encouraged to go if they are in the area.
* Ms. Stephanie White suggests a possible article about flights for injured K9s, and Mr. Dan Campbell suggests a possible article highlighting all of the different types of working dogs.

**Adjournment**

* Chairperson Mazzola calls for the Board to adjourn. With no disagreement, the meeting adjourns at 1:58 PM.