Official training bulletin from the Polk County Sheriff’s Office covering changes to procedures following the fatal fire in November that killed resident Loretta Pickard:

Often situations involving the use of Emergency Fire Dispatch Protocol 69 (Structure Fire), the caller reporting the structure fire are no longer in the building/structure, able to escape the building/structure, or are not directly involved. In these situations, the Emergency Fire Dispatch (EFD) Protocol should be followed as designed.

 In rare circumstances, the 1st party caller may be trapped inside the building/structure. If this occurs, every attempt must be made to get the caller out of danger. EFD Protocol 69 should be followed to include: asking all appropriate Case Entry Questions, Key Questions, providing all possible and appropriate Post-Dispatch Instructions, and linking to panel B-1 to provide ‘Trapped in Building Fire (1st party)’ instructions. If the caller is still unable to exit the building/structure after all PDI/PAI/DLS instructions have been provided, the call taker must provide EFD Protocol 69 PDIb “If it’s safe to do so, leave the building, close the doors behind you, and remain outside.” every 30 seconds until the caller exits the building or the call is complete.

If while on the call it is determined that the fire department is unable to make entry, and all other means of assistance have been exhausted, the caller must be told to exit the building immediately. If the caller is unsure on how to escape, they must be told to use any means necessary to get out of the structure. In these situations, once protocol is complete, the call taker must tell the caller “Help is unable to reach you. You have to get out of the house now, and use any means necessary to do so.” This phrase must be repeated every 30 seconds until the caller exits the building or the call is complete.

In addition to the above steps, a supervisor must be notified of the situation. Once notified, the supervisor must sit at the position with the call taker and monitor the call to assist when necessary.