



Mike Hilley, EMS Manager
311 Grand Avenue, Suite 108
Bellingham, WA 98225
360-778-5209

**Emergency Medical Services
Executive Oversight Board
January 22, 2020
Minutes**

Board Members in Attendance:

Executive Satpal Sidhu
Barry Buchanan, *Whatcom County Council*
Scott Korhuis, *Small Cities Mayor*
Rick Kowsky, *Citizen at Large (Cascade Ambulance)*
*Dr. Rush, MD, *Medical Community Representative*

Seth Fleetwood, *Bellingham Mayor*
Lisa Anderson, *Bellingham City Council*
RobRoy Graham, *Fire Commissioners*
Hall Walker, *Citizen Budget/Finance*
~~=not present~~

Also Present:

Mike Hilley, *WC EMS Manager*
Jeremy Morton, *WC EMS*
Chief Hewett, *COB/BFD*
Chief McLane, *WCFD 11*
Brian Heinrich, *COB*
Tawni Helms, *Whatcom County Administration*

Scott Ryckman, *MSO, COB/BFD*
Dr. Wayne, *MPD (via phone)*
Chief DeBruin, *WCFD 14*
Bill Lee, *WCFD #11*
Tyler Schroeder, *WC Executive Office*

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Deputy Executive Schroeder welcomed everyone and roundtable introductions took place. The meeting agenda was reviewed. No changes to the agenda were requested. New Board member Lisa Anderson representing City Council was introduced and welcomed to the Board. A brief history of the EOB founded in 2015 was shared which allowed for the formation of the EMS Levy Planning group and the eventual success of the 2016 Levy. Dr. Rush was introduced as a candidate with a wealth of knowledge, interest and enthusiasm for the vacant Medical Community Representative position. His attendance was welcomed by the Board and a motion to jointly appoint him was made and passed unanimously.

MINUTES APPROVED:

After Board review of the September 11, 2019 meeting minutes, EMS Manager Hilley asked if there were any modifications, hearing none, the minutes were accepted into the record as presented.

EMS BUDET REVIEW

M. Hilley gave a brief overview of the EMS Fund and distributed the current 2019/2020 budget worksheet that included YTD actuals through August. The EMS budget is on track and there are no anticipated major expenditures going forward during biennial budget process. Fund balance projections continue to be higher than anticipated due to increased revenue and grants such as the Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant for paramedic training and the Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) Medicare reimbursement revenue.

A review of the current actuals reflected an increase in the Fund balance resulting from decreased first year spending and the \$2.6M increase in fee revenue from the Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) reimbursement.

For the first time capital purchases are on the agenda for discussion and recommendation. The increased revenue allows us to have that conversation as a healthy fund balance will help us to absorb these costs.

TAB REPORT

Gurney Purchase

The system's current gurney's have limited weight capacity. The MSOs from both ALS provider agencies researched several options available for gurney replacement. On-site demonstrations were arranged that allowed all medics the opportunity to review and test the models to ensure the equipment would meet their expectations. M. Hilley stressed that the acquisition of new gurneys was a risk management approach with the inclusion of the powerlift capability in the selected model. In comparison, the current gurney used requires 4-5 people to lift into the rig.

Cascade Ambulance uses the Stryker gurney system and it is a very nice, premier system. The only downside is there is no interchangeability with these gurneys throughout the system. They are not compatible with the current equipment.

Inquiries about the functionality of the equipment if part powerlift component goes out were raised. The equipment has overrides throughout so it remains functional. The new powerlift gurneys will allow the ALS unites to move away from antiquated equipment which will limit our exposure to liability.

How was the powerload functionality assessed and what was the nexus for reaching this decision?

The power lift maintenance fee is included in the \$600k purchase fee. An annual maintenance fee will be contracted going forward.

Mayor Fleetwood made a motion to recommend the purchase for Council approval. The motion was seconded by Councilor Anderson and the motion passed unanimously.

After the motion was approved Mr. Walker asked that information related to large purchases be distributed to the Board sooner. He also stated that he appreciated the work that went into the research and would like to have more time to review the information. M. Hilley agreed that information could be compiled and distributed sooner for the Board's review and input.

EMS LEVY PLANNING

M. Hilley reported that the EMS Levy group has been chartered and they will be meeting and working soon. Levy planning is a big process and he is mindful of the efforts involved. He plans to bring back Helen Chatalas from King County. They just succeeded with their new levy with 80% voter approval. There are a lot of good things to incorporate into our planning and to share with our community. He also noted that there are many familiar faces on the EMS Levy Planning work group. He's also recruited a new Citizen member, Dick Williams. He currently works for RAM construction and has a King County EMS background and is very familiar with levy planning.

In addition to the EMS Levy Work Group, the EMS Finance Committee has already met twice and will meet on a quarterly basis. The committee is comprised of Finance representatives from all of the EMS Partner agencies, Whatcom County, City of Bellingham and Fire District 7. Pat Dunn Chairs this committee.

TRAINING COORDINATOR-FTE

M. Hilley reported that the job description for the Training Coordinator FTE had been finalized and that the primary focus of this position is for the BLS community. Training is an important and essential component of the system. The TAB recommended hiring a training coordinator that possessed a high level of skills. The new FTE will report to the EMS Manager and work closely with the WCEMSTC. The job description was distributed for board review. Solicitation will begin with the approval of budget authority.

S. Korthuis made a motion to recommend the position for Council approval. B. Buchanan seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

RESCUE HUB

All Whatcom County Fire and EMS agencies use EMSONLINE, a web based online learning platform. This platform will no longer be supported after December 31, 2020. Thus, WCEMS, WCEMSTC, WC Fire Chief's Association and training officers conducted an evaluative process to recommend a replacement platform. They have selected Rescue Hub. This platform will be used for by all Fire and EMS agencies in the County. The TAB has recommended the acquisition of Rescue Hub for county wide training compliance and communications, that includes 500 EMTs and 50 paramedics countywide. There is a reduced fee when all agencies have subscribed.

Asking the EMS levy to pay for the Rescue HUB. \$25/year-per medic. Fire side initiates a contract for their side of the house. Good product, efficient and consistent within the system.

The question was raised whether or not the \$40k is for a one-time purchase and whether there was special software for integrated data. It's a web-based platform. It is a recurring contract that can be opened up every year to make any necessary changes. This works for agencies on the OTEP plan and will let us communicate to all EMTs at once.

Makes compliance easier to track. CQI information to identify and fix the gaps and build training programs.

R. Kowski made a motion to recommend funding for the acquisition of Rescue Hub. Mayor Korthuis seconded the motion and the vote passed unanimously.

EMS MANAGER REPORT

- ALS/GIS/ARC analysis for 5th Medic Unit
Entrada work- analysis is being developed to begin discussion on the data we are starting to see and help provide the documentation we need for the important decision points in front of us.
- Paramedic Training 2020 is in motion

- 7 students in the program. Great outreach and integration opportunities. The cost is expensive so we need to talk about sustainability for the class. We've done well to create some efficiencies, but have more work to do.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Commissioner Graham expressed interest in supporting and elevating BLS.

Chief DeBruin stated that the goal would be to bring awareness of the BLS needs into the next levy.

M. Hilley agreed and stated that we want to start talking about supporting the BLS agencies in the next EMS Levy. The Stryker company would offer tremendous savings if we were able to purchase the ~62 gurneys needed to cover the entire EMS system (BLS agencies).

Dr. Wayne offered his praise and appreciation for Mr. Hilley's good work emphasizing what a tremendous job he's done for the EMS system in a very short time. M. Hilley in turned thanked the leadership and the good work of those that developed the 2016 EMS Levy Plan which provided him the framework to put the plan in motion.

FINAL COMMENTS: With no other items to report the meeting was adjourned at 3:10.

NEXT QUARTERLY MTG: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 2:00 – 3:00
Whatcom County Courthouse Conference Room 514

QUARTERLY MEETING SCHEDULE:

Wednesday, June 10 2:00 – 3:00

Wednesday, Sept. 9 2:00 – 3:00

Wednesday, Dec. 9 2:00 – 3:00