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Mike Hilley, EMS Manager
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Emergency Medical Services
Executive Oversight Board
June 13, 2018
Minutes

Board Members in Attendance:

Executive Louws, *Chair*
Barry Buchanan, *Whatcom County Council*
Scott Korhuis, *Small Cities Mayor*
Rick Kowsky, *Citizen at Large (Cascade Ambulance)*
David Lynch, MD, *Medical Community Representative*

Kelli Linville, *Bellingham Mayor*
Terry Bornemann, *Bellingham City Council*
RobRoy Graham, *Fire Commissioners*
Hall Walker, *Citizen Budget/Finance*
=not present

Also Present:

Tyler Schroeder, *EMS Administrator*
Chief DeBruin, *WCFD 14*
Chief McLane, *WCFD 11*
Rob Wilson, *What-Comm*

Mike Hilley, *WC EMS Manager*
Asst. Chief Hewitt, *COB/BFD*
Commissioner Bill Lee, *WCFD 11*
Tawni Helms, *Whatcom County Administration*

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Chairman Louws welcomed everyone and roundtable introductions took place. The meeting agenda was reviewed and no changes were requested.

MINUTES APPROVED:

After Board review of the March 14, 2018 meeting minutes, Chairman Louws recognized that, by affirmation of those present, the minutes were accepted into the record as presented.

EMS ADMINISTRATION REPORT:

Paramedic Training

EMS Manager, Mike Hilley provided an EMS Administration update. The most pressing priority has been the very timely and complex Paramedic Training Accreditation process. This effort has been led by Therese Williams, Associate Dean of Bellingham Technical College and Fire Fighter/Paramedic Rob Stevenson. Their combined efforts should hopefully result in a paramedic training class beginning this fall to serve our ALS providers; Bellingham Fire and Fire District 7. Students have already been identified from both agencies as they anticipate paramedic vacancies resulting from attrition. There is also a possibility that Assistance Firefighters Grant (AFG) grant funding may come through to help reduce training costs to the EMS Fund.

Community Paramedic Training

Another priority and focus of the administration is expansion of the Community Paramedic Program. M. Hilley reported that he has assigned a work group to begin developing a work plan and structures to define needs and resources which will help to determine how the Whatcom County EMS Community Paramedic Program will look. Commissioner Graham asked when and if there would be more “boots on the ground”. Agencies will be impacted but not likely before the end of the year. The program will be modeled after the Pathways Hub/Spike system. A lot of the efforts made are through social work. The goal is to have a plan developed for presenting to the TAB and EOB in September. Mayor Linville asked if any part of Bellingham Fire Department’s Community Paramedic Program could be replicated. M. Hilley responded that it would indeed be modeled after their program with additional elements and resources. Discussion continued related to the value of the program and varying needs throughout the community. Executive Louws shared his appreciation for the systems that are beginning to work and is looking forward to the expanded effort. The plan will include all of these important decision points.

Image Trend (ePCR)

M. Hilley announced the recent hiring of an EMS Data Analyst. Jeremy Morton has worked with King County, Group Health and most recently, Skagit Regional Health to launch their Epic program. He has a wealth of experience and a skill set uniquely prepared for our Image Trend implementation effort.

To date Bellingham has completed most of the front end data work and it should be completed this week. Education is scheduled for the week of 7/31 – 8/2. This is a critical component to ensure all agencies and users of the program are given ample opportunity to be successful with the new system.

Implementation will be rolled out in phases. First phase implementation will begin with Fire District 7, North Whatcom Fire and Rescue, and Lummi Island. We anticipate all agencies to be implemented by the end of the year. M. Hilley spoke to his great appreciation for the huge effort made by Chris Hughes of Bellingham Fire Department. C. Hughes has contributed so much to the countywide effort to make this possible.

EMS ADMINISTRATION OFFICE:

M. Hilley reported that a hand-shake agreement had been made between Whatcom County EMS and PeaceHealth for housing the EMS Administration office. The hospital has rental space in the downtown area they are willing to lease to Whatcom County for the purposes of housing EMS Administration. This would be beneficial for a number of reasons.

- The location is close to WAHA, Whatcom EMS Trauma Care Council, Whatcom County Administration, and many other EMS partners.
- The cost is nominal particularly in comparison to the renovation costs necessary to house EMS Administration at the Whatcom Unified Emergency Coordination Center (WUECC).
- Great opportunity for networking resource coordination in the downtown sector.

Executive Louws stated his appreciation for the opportunity. If the hospital lease cannot be extended beyond a couple of years, the cost to renovate the originally designated EMS Administration office located at the WUECC will have likely increased.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

M. Hilley distributed a 1st quarter 2018 financial report developed from the information submitted by both ALS agencies. The information reflected expenditures and revenues as very close to projections. There are minor fluctuations in line items as the system has evolved i.e. lower EMS Admin expenditures, etc. M. Hilley is engaging the financial officers of the ALS agencies and Whatcom County to convene and

review monthly or quarterly financial data. It will be important for them to review and provide input so we are all on the same page and we are telling the whole story.

He is also working on a 2017 annual report that will create a baseline for future annual reports. This will be presented at the September Board meeting.

H. Walker asked what was driving the savings illustrated in the 2017 financial report. The savings are due to the larger than projected sales and property tax revenue. At the same time user fees decreased. It will be important to get more detail as it is easy to see how tight the budget is moving forward.

Executive Louws asked if the board had any questions or suggestions for future reporting. Mayor Korthuis asked for more data. M. Hilley said Image Trend will soon be able to provide a lot of the data we are looking for in a steady and consistent format. The question was raised if we could use the data to make future decisions. That is precisely the plan; to have data driven decision making capability. M. Hilley continued that we can use that data to create heat maps that reflect types of calls in all areas of the county. This will effectively inform our decisions. The question was raised if there were other destinations for transport besides the hospital. There are no other transport destinations at this time, but we are working on certifying other appropriate locations such as the Triage Center, etc. Mayor Linville said she was looking for information related to trends, responses and outcomes. M. Hilley responded that he will be looking back at the data to see if there are efficiencies and opportunities to free up medic units. Questions were raised about how dispatch may be able to help. R. Wilson indicated that dispatch works through a triage system with set questions and they regularly review and discuss how calls are being triaged.

The Image Trend ePCR system will collect a lot of the information we are inquiring about and much of that data can be seen in a dashboard format for update tracking. He suggested that a presentation of the Image Trend program be made at the next EOB meeting. We can look at the information for a policy standpoint. M. Hilley said Image Trend will solve a lot of problems through the data. Dr. Lynch echoed the request for data and asked if patients being served by EMS have existing relationships with a primary care physician and suggested having discussions with the medical community to ensure service expectations and follow up are understood.

A brief review of the What-Comm billing was discussed with an adjustment to the year-end true up. This reflects another good example of the system working because all parties are working together. A proposal to adjust the billing method will be presented to the EOB in September.

Executive Louws reminded the Board that the financial reports will tell our story as responsible government officials. The first time we go out to renew the EMS Levy we will have to demonstrate our good work in staying true to the ballot measure that was approved. He continued by thanking everyone involved for getting us to this point and thanked M. Hilley for his good work.

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD: None

FINAL COMMENTS: Mayor Linville emphasized the extraordinary effort it took to get here where there is administrative oversight of this successful system. It's been through everyone's good work.

With no other items to report the meeting was adjourned at 2:50.

NEXT MEETING: September 12, 2018 at 2:00 – 3:00 PM

Whatcom County Courthouse Conference Room 514