



## Emergency Medical Services EMS Oversight Board Meeting

800 Chestnut Street

Online Meeting

February 9th, 2022 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM

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## Minutes

### Board Members:

Paul Walker

Michael Lilliquist

Rob Roy Graham

Seth Fleetwood – Mayor of Bellingham

Rick Kowski

Dr. Rob Rush

Mayor Korthisus

Tyler Bird (omitted?)

1. Welcome & Approval of the September 8th, 2021 Minutes.
  - a. Motion to Approve the Sep 8th, Minutes offered by Scott, seconded by Rick Kowski. Motion unanimously approved.
2. Marianne Caldwell gave the group an update on the budget as of January 27th, 2022.
  - a. Marianne presented the latest spreadsheet representing the “near year end” of numbers looking at the projected end fund balance of \$22.3 mil at the end of 2021 as they close out 2021 expenditures. Projected end fund balance in 2022, at \$21.6 mil. There are some outstanding expenditures that haven’t been charged yet. Paramedic school still has outstanding bills in 2022. This end fund balance could be less but this is pretty close. Other 2021 obligations will move to 2022 where some of those projects were not accomplished in 2021. This includes the purchase of a new Paramedic Unit vehicle, station upgrades for Station 75 and several contracts related to BFD and the hiring of laterals and the onboarding costs for up to 8 Firefighter/Paramedics.
  - b. Lilliquist questions how much of the end fund balance is due to not implementing an additional medic unit during the levy period.
3. Technical Advisory Board Report, Mike Hilley
  - a. Levy planning began in early 2020, part of the committee exploration included potential for a 2022 BLS allocation reimbursement. Conversations identified stresses on the fire departments during the last couple years, and these conversations eventually led to the development of an equitable allocation

formula for BLS allocation. The largest increase of BLS call volume increased from 2020-2021. The finance committee sent a favorable recommendation to consider this formula.

- b. Rob Roy Graham (?) speaks about the effects he has seen due to increased BLS call volume, in relation to the department he works at. Discussion ensues about the increasing lack of volunteers to staff stations. Lynden Mayor Korthius agrees that BLS is a more difficult situation to address in rural areas of the county, and questions how money will be spent in the future to address these concerns. Satpal concludes that this is not a one-time issue, it is systemic and will continue in the future.
- c. Rick mentions that the funds are part of a decapitated timeline, and the board should focus on putting power-something in ambulances first??
- d. Michael questions what original timeline exists for the GEMT.
- e. Mike explains that the motion sent from the TAB, for the EOB to consider is a \$5 million BLS allocation. In addition, Mike speaks about the hesitation for revenue projections. (45 mins).
- f. Walker conveys the importance of creating a sustainable path for BLS allocation, and the closeness of the last levy when it came to the voting. He also questions how the State Bill 1310 has influenced the increase in BLS calls. Korthius also speaks about what a sustainable budget would look like for the future.
- g. Satpal explains that the important focus should be on the future of BLS allocation, compared to the one time \$5 million. Increasing the levy is not the answer, there are other ways too.
- h. Rick Kowski makes a motion for the board to fund the \$5 million for BLS support, and to fund the Stryker Power Load for the districts who have not installed it and for reimbursement for districts who have installed it. Rob Roy Graham seconds the motion, and someone else does too...
  - i. *Discussion:* Satpal recommends that the board takes 30 days to review the information, come up with a plan for how to sustain the budget in the future, who will get the money, and reconvene for another meetings.
  - ii. Lilliquist asks for clarification around the meaning of the motion, specifically relating to the power load system. Kowski explains the importance of the power load system, and Rush agrees with Kowski on the importance of this system. Scott asks about the power load system cost, which is around \$25,000 per unit, for 56 units. Mike recommends having the Stryker Load System as a separate motion, in order to move forward with that piece.
  - iii. Mayor Korthius asks Mayor Fleetwood how he plans to spend the BLS allocation funds, due to the city of Bellingham receiving more funds based on the BLS allocation formula. Bill responds for Mayor Fleetwood, explaining the cost that covid-19 has taken on maintaining personnel, and increasing fuel prices. Mayor Korthius asks about the district's pre-determined plans for the funding. District 1 Chief responds about his district's plan for the funding. He speaks on behalf of the county chief's, when he says that there should be some BLS funding included in the next levy, but they understand the main focus of the levy should be on ALS. He

agrees with Mayor Korthius that there should be a representation of the district's spending intentions.

- iv. Satpal expresses his disagreement with the BLS allocation equitable formula, saying the money should be distributed where it is most needed. Rick respectfully disagrees with Satpal, and says he would like to vote on the motion at hand. Bill also respectfully disagrees with Satpal, and explains that all of the fire districts have need for the allocated BLS funds, and that the equitable formula has already been developed to best assess county needs. Satpal responds that he understands the disagreements, and that some of the issues he brings up are more systemic-based.
  - v. Mayor Korthius speaks to Bill, and mentions that some of the previous financial concerns brought up have already been addressed.
  - vi. Michael Lilliquist expresses that he is prepared to support the motion as presented. The motion is seconded by a couple people [1:20]. Satpal asks for clarification around the second part of the motion, pertaining to the number of units needed. Hilley clarifies that there would be 56 units, and \$25,000 per unit.
  - vii. [Someone] adds that upgrades to the power load systems should be included in the budget as well.
  - viii. Executive Satpal asks for a vote on the motion. Six members vote yes, one board member votes no, and one member abstained. The motion passes.
4. Levy Report Overview – Mike Hilley
    - a. A significant portion of the levy is in a draft form. Some more work is needed for the ALS/BLS committee and Levy-planning group. In the future, some of the language needs to be refined and to schedule a meeting with the EOB.
  5. Good of the Order