



Emergency Medical Services Technical Advisory Board

800 Chestnut Street
Online Meeting
March 1, 2023
2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Minutes

Board Members:

David Pethick, BFD Asst. Fire Chief,
City of Bellingham
Scott Ryckman, BFD MSO
Jerry DeBruin, WCEMS&TC
Marvin Wayne, WCEMS Medical
Program Director
Mike Hilley, WCEMS Administrator

Dan McDermott, BFD Division Chief of
Prospect Dispatch Center
Susie Johnson, PeaceHealth Medical
Rep.
Hank Maleng, Whatcom County Fire
Chiefs Assoc.

Board Members not Present:

Rob Stevenson, Paramedic Training
School

Ben Boyko, WCFD7 Assistant Fire Chief

Also Present:

Steve Cohen, WCEMS
Rosalee Cowan, WCEMS
Katie Poole, WCEMS

Ben Russell, WFD7
Diana Clinch, WCEMS

1. Welcome & Confirmation of the January 4, 2023 Minutes

Hilley introduced the group to Diana Clinch, the new EMS Data Analyst. Hilley and McDermott confirmed that Rob Stevenson will now be taking place of Micah Quintrall as the Paramedic Training Representative. After corrections to the attendance list and confirming changes to agency representations, Ryckman moved approval of the January 4th, 2023 minutes and McDermott seconded, the minutes were approved unanimously.

2. First Response Contract Meeting Schedule Update

Hilley

The First Responder Contract Committee has not met yet, a meeting date is to be determined. The First Responder ILA Amendment (C#201801022-2) has been routed for signature for an extension of contract terms by one year (2018-2023).

3. ALS Provider Contracts

- Committee Report/Update

Pethick

Pethick updated the group on high-level details of the new ALS contract committee discussions and development. The new agreement will include previously separate ILA amounts, such as the Community Paramedicine contracts, in the budget detail. There are two contracts in development, one for BFD and one for FD7 to make contract amendments more efficient. Streamlining the invoicing, recording, and amending process is a goal of this new contract. This contract is looking at the growth and change in Whatcom County within the life of the previous Levy and is including that perspective in this new contract to incrementally grow and change appropriately with the County for the system to not be overwhelmed and understaffed.

- EMS1 Capt. Expansion (Intro)

B. Russell

Russell updated the group about the need to expand the EMS1 Captain position to Whatcom County Fire District 7. An expansion of the position will provide areas outside Bellingham with improved response times and will improve surge capacity. Russell stated that this is an introductory topic for conversation. At the next TAB meeting, there will be a proper presentation.

McDermott made a motion to create a committee of the two systems analysts from Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham, and representatives of the two ALS providers to establish objective criteria for when to deploy an additional Medic Unit. Pethick seconded the motion, the motion was moved unanimously.

- Lateral Paramedic Contract

Pethick introduced the new Lateral Paramedic contract for 2023-2024 to the TAB, seeking support to move this topic to the EOB. The City of Bellingham and Whatcom County had a contract for 2021 and 2022 to hire a total of 6 lateral paramedics with preceptorship and completion training taking up to 6 months. The remaining funds from this contract were extended into 2023 resulting in the remaining funds being completely depleted in February. Pethick came to the group requesting support for a new Lateral Paramedic contract to begin and complete the training of new Lateral Paramedics for the Bellingham Fire Department.

DeBruin asked for clarity on the number of Paramedics needed per unit. Pethick explained that 4.6 medics are needed per seat in a Paramedic Unit, so 9.2 Paramedics per Paramedic Unit total. The .6 is for the additional Paramedic needed to cover unanticipated leave. Bellingham Fire Department operates four Paramedic Units and an EMS1 Captain Unit, equaling the minimum need for 38 Paramedics needed to operate the four Paramedic Units and the EMS1 position. Currently, BFD is at 35 Paramedic Units but anticipates future retirement from a few Paramedics. Ryckman stated that, optimally, the system would be well staffed at 48 Paramedics to maintain needed training as Firefighter/Paramedics. Russell stated that they operate at a comfortable 12 Paramedics for one Paramedic Unit at Whatcom County Fire District 7. Hilley would like this information and projection of the number of Paramedics in the County to be encapsulated to be shared with the EOB. Hilley also suggested that the EOB be informed of the end of the Lateral Paramedic program. Ryckman added that Whatcom County is unique in its Paramedic Training School and BLS/ALS capabilities due to Dr. Wayne's contributions and methodology. Non-Lateral Paramedic Training through the Whatcom County Paramedic School in the County will tend to be more efficient for the EMS system and ALS provider agencies in the long term.

4. Medic 75 Update

Ryckman

Ryckman relayed to the group that the new Paramedic Unit 75, stationed in Lynden, is doing very well. The crews are working well together and are getting settled into the new station. As of the TAB meeting, they had responded to 175 calls.

Pethick added that due to the delays in getting Medic 75 up and running, some of the original costs allocated to station remodeling and additional supplies were not used. At the next meeting, Pethick will present a new contract to address costs associated with the new Paramedic Unit that have been incurred in 2023.

Ryckman asked the group about the status of the Station 12 upgrades, which consist of moving the gym out of the bay to make space for a Paramedic Unit, bolstering sleeping quarters, and expanding living areas. Hilley added context to the question, stating that there were about one million dollars earmarked for Station 12 updates that were started over the last couple of years but never finished. Survey work was completed, plans were drawn up, and Whatcom County facilities tentatively confirmed that they can pick up the contract to build out that station.

Ryckman made an initial motion to direct the EOB to pursue an RFP and to secure funding and a contract to build out Station 12 for placement of a Paramedic Unit as

discussed in the GIS study and identified by the Technical Advisory Board in previous meetings. McDermott seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Conversation ensued, DeBruin stated that the group should take a close look at the cost and benefits of moving the Paramedic Unit from Station 4 to Station 12 to make sure those efforts and costs are cost-efficient. McDermott then clarified that there needs to be multiple RFP efforts made to take a look at all the costs associated with moving the Paramedic Unit or leaving the Paramedic Unit at Station 4.

McDermott amended the motion, moving the need for the EOB to review site options and costs for improving the structure of the current Paramedic Unit location - Station 4 and improving and/or accommodating through a temporary additional portable building at Station 12 in addition to the original building to accommodate a Paramedic Unit. DeBruin seconded this motion. This amendment was approved unanimously.

5. Paramedic School Report

Ryckman

Ryckman updated the group, stating that the Paramedic students are now working on rigs in the County. School is starting again in March for didactic studies. EMS educators from outside of Washington went on a site visit and commended the Paramedic School in Whatcom County. Hilley expressed that these reviews should be shared with the Whatcom County Public Safety Committee and the EOB.

6. Good of the Order

Cohen updated the group on the successful rollout of protocols, an ESE course, and the Handtevy Pediatric App. Whatcom County EMS has had a high demand for Narcan requests from the public and other public agencies through the Narcan Leave Behind program. Cohen is creating an SEI and ESE instructor pool to be used in the County for ongoing course instruction.

Wayne expressed thanks to the individuals who worked hard to get the Handtevy Pediatrics App up and running in the County. Wayne updated the group on other new projects, including that a whole blood program is in development for Whatcom County. Wayne introduced the topic of blood being used in the field. The proposal may include EMS Captain supervisor rigs having the blood program equipped in their vehicles. Wayne and the other system supervising doctors are investigating the use of ultrasound by ALS agencies.