



MINUTES – February 24, 2022 - 7:30 AM
BENTON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES EXECUTIVE BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
Richland City Shops Conference Room 110, 2700 Duportail Street
Public Call-In Number: 1-253-215-8782 or 1-669-900-6833
Meeting ID 941 0840 5753

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:38 a.m. by Chair Jon Amundson.

Attendance

Members

Jerome Delvin	Benton County (2 votes)
Keith Johnson <i>(arrived after roll call)</i>	Franklin County (2 Votes)
Marie Mosley	City of Kennewick (2 Votes)
Bob Gear <i>(arrived after roll call)</i>	City of Pasco (2 Votes)
Jon Amundson	City of Richland (2 Votes)
Brent Gerry <i>(attended via zoom)</i>	City of West Richland (1 Vote)
Bill Reed	Benton City (1 Vote)

Absent

Dave Giles	City of Prosser (1 Vote)
Ron Duncan	Benton County Fire Districts (1 Vote)
Duane Szendre	Benton PUD (1 Vote, Microwave Only)

Also Present Richland Interim Police Chief/BCES Director, Brigit Clary; Richland Police Commander/BCES Manager, Chris Lee; SECOMM Manager, Kim Lettrick; BCEM Manager, Deanna Davis; BCES IS Manager, Doug deGraaf; Accounting Specialist, Jordan George; Administrative Assistant/Board Secretary, Carole Cimrhakl

Other Attendees Reinke & Associates, Steve Reinke; Franklin County Sheriff, Jim Raymond; Benton County Deputy Administrator, Matt Rasmussen; City of West Richland Chief, Ben Majetich; City of Richland Finance Director, Brandon Allen *(attended via Zoom)*; City of Richland Accountant, Jeanne Portch *(attended via Zoom)*

Approval of Agenda

JEROME DELVIN MOVED AND MARIE MOSLEY SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 12-0.

Approval of Consent Calendar

1. Minutes – Jon Amundson
Approve the Minutes of the Benton County Emergency Services Executive Board Regular Meeting held January 27, 2022.
2. Minutes – Jon Amundson
Approve the Minutes of the Benton County Emergency Services Executive Board Strategic Planning Workshop (Part II) Meeting held February 10, 2022.

JEROME DELVIN MOVED AND MARIE MOSLEY SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 12-0.

Director's Report

3. Manager's Report – Chris Lee, RPD Commander/BCES Manager

Chris Lee advised SECOMM currently has 14 FTE positions open. 3 began training last Monday with one of those electing to drop from the program. There are 3 conditional offers out and 4 others are in various stages of the hiring process.

Site visits with Motorola were conducted last week. A proposal for the Microwave replacement is expected in a couple of months.

Items of Business

Benton County Emergency Services (BCES)

4. Carry-Over of Unexpended Grant Funds from Year Ending 2021 - Approval

Grant funds which were approved at the initial time of acceptance need to be carried over to allow previously approved projects completion. Purchase orders are also included.

The 2022 SECOMM adopted budget will be increased by 166,814. Of this amount, \$24,464 is grant funding. \$116,721 is purchase orders and \$25,629 is unused funds for the Strategic Plan project.

The 2022 BCEM adopted budget will be increased by \$746,681. Of this amount, \$746,490 is grant funding and \$191 is purchase orders carried over.

The 2022 800MHz adopted budget will be increased by \$879,518. This amount is due to purchase orders being carried over.

The 2022 Microwave adopted budget will be increased by \$265. This amount is due to purchase orders being carried over.

MARIE MOSLEY MOVED AND JEROME DELVIN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CARRY-OVER OF EXISTING BCES GRANT AND PROJECT FUNDS TO INCREASE THE 2022 APPROVED BCES BUDGET AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO MAKE THE NECESSARY BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 12-0.

5. Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning (HVAC) Unit Replacement - Approval

This request is to replace the heating/back-up cooling unit that is original to the BCES building. Replacement of the unit is \$51,337. Of this amount, \$33,928 will come from Emergency Management Performance Grant -American Rescue Plan Act (EMPG-ARPA) grant funding which is available this year only. The remaining \$17,409 will come from SECOMM Capital Fund Balance, leaving \$302,050 in the Capital Fund. A balance test will need to be conducted once the new unit is installed to ensure airflow is balanced throughout the BCES building; a separate request for \$13,500 can be expected in the coming months. There may be additional ARPA funding at that time which we hope to be able to use as a funding source.

MARIE MOSLEY MOVED AND JEROME DELVIN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE HVAC REPLACEMENT PROJECT USING \$17,409 FROM

SECOMM'S CAPITAL FUND BALANCE AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO MAKE THE NECESSARY BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 12-0.

6. Strategic Planning Process Part II – Discussion

Mr. Reinke went over what was covered in Session I to confirm what was accomplished, identifying goals and future actions.

GOALS:

SECOMM currently has 3 in training, 2 can only call receive and only 25 trained FTE's. Additionally, we have lost one part-time dispatcher and the two dispatchers who are in the running for Hanford Patrol are still pending. Having SECOMM fully staffed is a goal that has been identified and ideas to help that process were revisited. Designated times have been blocked out for interviews since the last workshop. Being down nearly 50% in staffing is prompting a stronger look at incentives to stay as well as to hire as this seems to be an increasing industry standard. More to come on this at the next meeting. A new recruiting app is currently under review.

Independent Agency

A group discussion was arranged to include the cities of Kennewick, Pasco and Richland along with the county representatives for Benton and Franklin Counties and associated legal counsel to discuss creating an Independent Agency. Take-aways from that discussion were the organization becoming a Public Corporation or a Public Development Authority (PDA) with the 3 city managers and 2 county representatives to form the Board of Directors.

Bi-PIN would join after formation of the independent agency. Assets would include the facilities and radio systems. A job description with comparables is being developed by Mr. Reinke for a full-time civilian leader. He anticipates this will be available at the regular March meeting.

Combining Emergency Management from Benton and Franklin Counties is being explored. Washington State Military Department doesn't seem to have any issue combining the two counties however doing so would likely diminish some grant funding as efficiencies would be expected to be gained. Each county has its own Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and both should be kept for redundancy.

Board and committee structures, voting authority, including duties and responsibility will be reviewed with law enforcement and fire leadership. An organizational chart, preliminary budget and funding/cost allocations are also being developed and should be ready to present at the March meeting.

Deploy Tyler CAD System

Deployment is expected by January 1, 2024. Current work to be done includes identifying acquisition and ongoing support costs, identifying options for diverse and redundant connectivity and confirming non-Tyler interface costs (Locution, PulsePoint, etc.). Tyler Technologies Jeff Moser is drafting a contract (costs included) which will be added into a budget and deployment plan all of which are anticipated to be brought forward to the Board at the March 24 meeting. If approved, a CAD Project Manager/Administrator job description would be developed, and the position would be hired. There will be an estimated cost included in the project budget for this. It was suggested a panel of Executive Board members could potentially facilitate the selection process as Bi-PIN would eventually join the group.

It was noted that the City of Kennewick is on track to deploy Tyler's RMS/JMS in early April.

Develop a Capital Plan

To become independent, all assets including radio sites, office and technical equipment will need to be identified and a replacement schedule established. A goal of June 1, 2022 was set as a tentative date to have the plan developed by the Director, Tech Manager and Richland Finance. Grant funding was identified as a potential funding source. Commissioner Delvin and Chief Gear agreed to investigate this further.

Meet the NENA standard for call answering time and the NFPA standard for dispatching priority I incidents.

The National Emergency Number Association (NENA) and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) call answering standard is to answer 90% of all 911 calls in less than 15 seconds and to answer 95% of all 911 calls in 20 seconds or less. The NFPA dispatching time standard is to dispatch priority calls with 60 seconds 90% of the time. This will be an ongoing goal and will depend on SECOMM's staffing model, levels of service expectations and definition of Priority I incidents.

Strengths and weaknesses were reviewed. Strengths included personnel relationships, agency partnerships, operational procedures and Locution. Weaknesses identified were low staffing levels, frequent leadership changes, inability to support responder agencies, potential risk to public, difficulty in supporting major incidents, no capital plan, funding challenges, out of date technical systems, failing or lacking redundancy (CAD, Microwave, VHF, core network), GIS conversion for Tyler CAD, out of date console furniture, and need for a more robust back-up center. Text-to-911 is waiting for additional software patches and AVL is currently available but not widely used.

Opportunities and threats were reviewed. Opportunities included starting fresh (a new agency), alternative funding sources identified as grants and sales taxes (1/10%, 2/10%), establishment of a replacement fund, vision for future plan and redefining how to do business (reorganization, staffing model, level of service, staffing), accreditation, training certification (HB 5555), opportunity to create a mission, vision and values statement for the organization, liability reduction for cities and counties as liability would fall to the stand-alone agency (Proximate Cause) and efficiency and effectiveness created by combining Bi-PIN and BCES with potential future additions (Fire Records Management, Police Support Specialists, Report Writers, Online Reporting, etcetera). Threats identified were staffing shortage, lack of momentum, unwillingness to change, funding, and technical system failures.

The Level of Service SECOMM should provide to the public is answering the phone in a timely, courteous and respectful manner. This directly correlates to staffing and an increase in FTE's. Mr. Reinke will develop an evolutionary staffing model for the future based on population and comparables.

The Level of Service SECOMM should provide to responders has many different roles and could include radio, technical and capital items. The level of service desired will directly impact staffing and will figure into a future staffing model as will increased costs will figure into the budget.

Options to decrease both costs and work effort by dispatch could include non-priority calls being handled by officers on their MDT's rather than through dispatch. A strategy for implementing this might be allocating costs based on transmissions rather than by calls for service. How to allocate costs fairly will be a future discussion/decision point.

Benton County Emergency Management (BCEM)

Southeast Communications Center (SECOMM)

800MHz System

Benton County Microwave System

Discussion Items

Announcements

The next meeting will be extended to 9:30 and a revised calendar reservation will be sent out following today's meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 a.m.

APPROVED:



Jon Amundson, BCES Executive Board Chair

Date Approved: 3/24/2022

ATTEST:



Carole Cimrhakl, BCES Board Secretary

Date Published: August 4, 2022