



**MINUTES – May 12, 2022 - 3:00 PM**  
**BENTON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES EXECUTIVE BOARD**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**City of Richland Council Chambers ~ 625 Swift Blvd**  
**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 3:00 p.m. by Chair Jon Amundson.

**Attendance**

**Members**

Jerome Delvin	Benton County (2 votes)
Keith Johnson	Franklin County (2 Votes)
Marie Mosley	City of Kennewick (2 Votes)
Bob Gear	City of Pasco (2 Votes)
Jon Amundson	City of Richland (2 Votes)
Dave Giles <i>(remote)</i>	City of Prosser (1 Vote)
Brent Gerry <i>(remote)</i>	City of West Richland (1 Vote)
Bill Reed	Benton City (1 Vote)
Ron Duncan	Benton County Fire Districts (1 Vote)
Duane Szendre <i>(remote)</i>	Benton PUD (1 Vote, Microwave Only)

**Absent**

No Members were absent.

**Also Present** Richland Police Chief, Brigit Clary; Richland Assistant City Manager/BCES Director, Drew Florence; 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; Benton County Under Sheriff, Jon Law *(remote)*; City of Kennewick Director of Management Services, Christina Palmer; Benton County Fire District I Chief, Lonnie Click; City of Richland Finance Director, Brandon Allen; City of Richland Accountant, Jeanne Portch

**Approval of Agenda**

**KEITH JOHNSON MOVED AND JEROME DELVIN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 14-0.**

**Approval of Consent Calendar**

- I. Minutes – Jon Amundson  
Approve the Minutes of the Benton County Emergency Services Executive Board Regular Meeting held March 24, 2022.

**KEITH JOHNSON MOVED AND JEROME DELVIN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 14-0.**

**Director's Report**

2. Manager's Report – Drew Florence, Richland Assistant City Manager/BCES Director  
Drew Florence advised SECOMM currently has 13.5 FTE positions open. Three are currently in background. Interviews conducted yesterday resulted in 2 moving forward.

**Items of Business**

Benton County Emergency Services (BCES)

3. Strategic Planning Update

Mr. Reinke reviewed the work that has been done over the past several months with the executive summary laying out the goals. He noted that the soon-to-be-hired Executive Director will have their own philosophies, leadership style, and past experiences and background to help lead the agency forward with the Board.

**Goal 1 – Recruit and Hire a Civilian Executive Director**

Of 21 applicants, about 17 were previewed, some of which did not meet the minimum qualifications. Five were selected to move forward in the process. Additional questions and paperwork were sent out to the applicants. Once that information is received it will be reviewed and potential interviews will be scheduled with a panel of interviewers. Franklin County Sheriff Jim Raymond commented that he believes all agencies should have input before a selection is made. An Executive Director will hopefully be hired by the end of this summer.

**Goal 2 – Deploy a Tyler Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System**

The BiPIN Executive Board contracted with Tyler Technologies for a new Records Management System (RMS) and Jail Management System (JMS) that went live in April 2022. During deployment, the planned implementation of a two-way interface between Tyler's RMS/JMS and the Southeast Communications Center (SECOMM) Hexagon CAD system would not deliver the necessary level of operational functionality. Staff presented options to resolve the integration issues and the respective Boards decided the best option was to negotiate a contract with Tyler to deploy it's CAD system at SECOMM.

Mr. Reinke has negotiated and prepared a contract for Tyler CAD however, some concerns about moving forward exist due to issues BiPIN is currently experiencing with its RMS/JMS implementation. Kennewick City Manager Marie Mosley said Tyler has committed to bringing additional resources in that are working towards solving the issues that have risen during the Go-Live. Due to this, she suggested additional language be added to the CAD contract to ensure the same type of issues are not repeated with a CAD implementation. Clarification of what criteria should be met prior to signing the CAD contract included adding specific benchmarks to the contract as well as having BiPIN user acceptance before moving forward with Tyler CAD. Additionally, the Fire Districts want to ensure Fire RMS is working before beginning a CAD build. Drew Florence related that during recent contract negotiations, Mr. Reinke pushed for Tyler to add additional language to the contract which Tyler wasn't agreeable to until BiPIN began experiencing issues during the RMS/JMS deployment. He believes there is leverage in holding off the signing of the CAD contract and that some of that leverage may be lost by signing now. After contract execution, the Tyler AD deployment process is expected to take anywhere from 18 to 36 months.

An existing challenge is maintaining the existing Hexagon CAD system while awaiting the

transition to Tyler CAD Go-Live which is estimated in 2+ years. Upgrading Hexagon from 9.3 to 9.4 is estimated at just over one million dollars. This includes the implementation services, software upgrades, Microsoft licenses, and server hardware. Not included is the workstation hardware for dispatch, which is included in the Tyler contract.

There is an option through Hexagon to apply a patch (CAD 9.3 MR6) (\$127,223) which would allow BCES to upgrade the workstation hardware and permits Windows 10 compatibility. This patch also resolves a known issue with the current CAD version the encounters an email notification failure randomly. Hexagon has offered an additional discount for the CAD 9.4 upgrade of \$48,905, bringing the upgrade implementation services to \$611,418 rather than \$660,323.

The current servers are over 7 years old and by using the extended support to try to carry that to 10 years also includes some risk. The current Hexagon CAD servers are physical servers and if they fail the recovery will be significantly challenging and may not recover all services. If we upgrade Hexagon, we are also upgrading on brand-new server hardware, installing the latest operating systems and SQL server database, and the CAD 9.4 software gets installed as well. This would also carry us through the 3-year requirement for public disclosure. The servers are \$275k.

Another option is to look at a cloud-based solution to preserve the records we have for the required three-year retention period for public records requests after the go-live with Tyler so we can ensure access in a secure environment.

The workstations must be upgraded regardless of using Tyler CAD or an upgrade with Hexagon and is estimated at \$180,383. This includes all dispatch and CAD support staff workstations and monitors.

SECOMM is currently operating on Windows 8.1 which Microsoft will no longer support as of January 10, 2023. BCES did attempt to run Windows 10 on the current CAD 9.3 version but encountered significant loss of functionality.

The Washington State Patrol (WSP) audits entities that process, store and/or transmit Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) and our audit is scheduled for July. Agencies are required to use equipment and software that is on supported platforms. With Microsoft losing support we will be out of compliance and creating the potential to be cut off from accessing the records. The city attorney recommends against this as it poses a liability issue for BCES should a preventable data breach occur. There is also the potential for a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) audit in September which is the ultimate authority for the CJIS information. We don't know what their grace period is or isn't.

Options, the associated costs and the pros and cons will be provided at the next meeting along with a recommended action. It's a question of reliability and robustness of the current CAD for as long as needed versus taking some risks with the hardware.

Mr. Reinke suggests Sciens Consulting would be a good choice for project management in deploying the new CAD given their past work and familiarity with BCES and BIPIN. Getting their expertise would eliminate the need to hire a CAD Administrator. At some point BIPIN and BCES are going to come together and Sciens could also assist with the merging of the two entities. Regardless of whether there is a consolidation or revision to the governance structures of the entities, BCES and BIPIN will have to agree on long-term funding, how to assess users,

system access and control, technical support and the location of the system's hardware.

Tyler CAD will be implemented on server infrastructure hosted by BIPIN. A decision to transition the server infrastructure to BCES will need to be made based on the age of BIPIN's equipment when Tyler's CAD is ready for go-live, the stability and reliability of the connectivity between BIPIN and BCES during deployment and testing and whether it is possible to deploy a high availability, redundant environment in BIPIN's existing infrastructure.

### **Goal 3 – Recruit, Hire and Train Line Employees until SECOMM's Budgeted Positions are Filled.**

As of May 6, SECOMM has 26 employees that are trained and able to do the work of 44.16 employees. The average overtime each dispatcher works is between 50 and 60 hours per month.

Drew Florence noted that it's not uncommon to see the same dispatcher 7 days in a row. Several dispatchers worked over a thousand hours each of overtime last year. He said that if any more dispatch staff are lost, the conversation won't be about levels of service – it will be about whether or not basic service can be provided. He cautioned that when talking about the decisions and what is going to be done to affect the lives of the dispatchers who are staying strong and remaining, consideration of the impacts to dispatch staff is vital because if we change their world too much we may lose more staff and then we'll be talking about major disruption to levels of service until we get those positions filled. We are on the brink of not being able to staff positions. We're not far from dire straits. They are concerned about moving to a stand-alone agency and what that will do to their benefits, the issues that law enforcement is currently experiencing on the BiPIN side and proposed changes to CAD; it's all very concerning to them.

It does appear things are improving slightly. Strategies are in place and negotiations with the Southeast Washington Telecommunicators Guild regarding entry level and overall compensation are in the works. Suggestions for additional strategies such as recruitment videos, press releases and paid advertising were discussed. West Richland Mayor, Brent Gerry spoke in support of engaging with employees to keep them informed about the process, thus providing some level of security as well as compensating dispatch staff better for the job they do.

City Manager, Jon Amundson indicated a meeting was held about legal documents that may be required for incorporation as a stand-alone agency. One of the pros of a stand-alone agency was the ability to bond or have financing ability. What if Richland as the administrative agency took on that deck capacity and through the interlocal agreements had the payback from the difference agencies? Knowing we need to invest in a lot of these capital items, we have an ability through our interlocal agreements. We had finance check with our bond council, and they agreed it could be done through Interlocals so that we could start moving on investment in some of these projects. We could form the PDA and then they could contract to Richland in the short term and keep them as Richland employees and establish that working relationship through the position description and from a personnel standpoint, keep that solid for the next few years.

### **Goal 4 – Make BCES a Stand-Alone Agency**

It was agreed that the goal of becoming a stand-alone agency should be paused temporarily to focus on staffing, RMS/JMS deployment, existing CAD concerns, capital planning and hiring an Executive Director. The ultimate goal remains becoming an independent agency.

An important consideration for a stand-alone agency is the cost of services and the additional staff necessary for independence. An Executive Director is planned to be hired and is not considered in the stand-alone agency expenses. Additional staff expenses would include Finance

and HR Managers.

One-time expenses are estimated at \$244,919 and include operating supplies, computer hardware, office furniture, cellular and office phones, NEOGOV – Granicus – and Finance implementations, facility sign and rebranding and an added storage room. Salaries and Benefits for a Finance Manager and HR Manager are not included in this total.

Recurring expenses include operating supplies, meeting expenses, janitorial supplies, increased audit expenses, cell phone service, HR fax line, phone line maintenance (Cisco), postage, Executive Director travel, legal and copier services, insurance, utilities and HVAC maintenance for the added storage room, printer maintenance, software licenses, subscription fees, tuition and conference fees for the Director and vehicle fuel and maintenance. These costs are expected to total \$320,313.

User fees were created for 2023 and 2024 and were based on typical payroll, materials and services and other expected cost increases and allocated user fees based on BCES' current cost allocation methodology. Start-up costs for the stand-alone are assumed to have been paid in 2022. The estimates also presumed the Administrative Jurisdiction would not provide health care and other benefits to the new agency's employees, thus 15% was added to current healthcare and benefit costs to approximate expected cost increases. The fees did not include the Administrative Jurisdiction's annual assessment fee of 7%. The Executive Director, a job reclassification and line employee incentives were included in the estimates. The estimated change in user fees for 2023 are \$1,359,303. User fees for 2024 are estimated at 4.28% for a total of \$288,097.

If the Board revised the existing Interlocal Agreement as an incremental step toward becoming a stand-alone agency and Richland remained as the administrative jurisdiction at the current rate of 7%, the increase to existing agencies for 2023 is nearly one million dollars and includes the Executive Director, one reclassification and incentive pay.

As a stand-alone agency, user fees for 2023 are estimated at \$369,074 more than they would be if BCES remained as an interlocal agency. The higher fees and one-time start-up expenses of \$244,919 brings the total estimated cost of becoming a stand-alone agency is \$613,993 spread between the 2022 and 2023 budgets. Increases to user fees would extend indefinitely into the future.

Benton County Commissioner Jerome Delvin reported that our Federal Lobbyist is looking for federal money.

### **Goal 5 – Develop a Capital Plan**

Mr. Reinke thought Sciens would be a good choice to develop a capital plan. Part of the overall strategic vision for this will be dependent on what long-term sustainable funding will look like be it taxes, grants or a combination of both. The capital plan should integrate both long-term technical system needs, replacement costs and facility infrastructure.

Existing capital needs were listed in order of priority and include estimates except for Tyler CAD. Microwave System Replacement (\$5.5 million); Hexagon Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System Updates (up to \$1.3 million); Tyler Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System (\$1.5 million); VHF Radio System (\$2 million); Facility Infrastructure (\$2.5 million). The total estimate is \$12.8 million.

### **Goal 6 – Adopt National Call Taking and Dispatch Time Standards as Performance Goals**

Until the current staffing model is met it is difficult to foresee what the future will look like. Strategies offered were more efficient staffing during peak hours, creating a training coordinator, 24/7 supervision and development of a more comprehensive quality improvement program.

### **Goal 7 – Establish Long-Term Sustainable Funding**

To get outside of user fees and grants, the public safety sales tax is probably the best option and has been passed in multiple counties – usually in the first ask. Timing will be critical with regard to other competing interests.

Mr. Reinke is preparing to wrap-up his services and believes a new Director will be great for the organization. He will work through the issues with the Tyler contract and will prepare another draft of what final considerations would be.

#### Benton County Emergency Management (BCEM)

4. Washington State and Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) Contract E22-002 Amendment I – Approval

The amendment adds \$18,970 to Goods and Services and are a reallocation from unspent state contracts. Existing unspent funds from Salaries (\$5,000), Benefits (\$27,000) and Travel (\$4,000) will also be moved into Goods and Services to be used to purchase 3 Ludlum Model 52 portal monitors.

**JEROME DELVIN MOVED AND MARIE MOSLEY SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE AMENDMENT I TO ADD \$18,970 TO GOODS AND SERVICES AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO MAKE THE NECESSARY BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 9-0.**

5. Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) Contract E22-279 - Approval  
Contract E22-279 adds \$28,600 and is the result of a reallocation of unspent funds from the 2020 EMPG grant program. The funds will be used for the replacement of staff personal computers and monitors and will also be used to purchase more ergonomic desks and racks for the Amateur Radio Room, all of which were approved by the state.

**JEROME DELVIN MOVED AND BRENT GERRY SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE CONTRACT E22-279 AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO MAKE THE NECESSARY BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 9-0.**

#### Southeast Communications Center (SECOMM)

##### 800MHz System

6. Red Mountain Radio Tower Update – NEPA Process and Mitigation  
Adcomm has Black Mountain Consulting (a subcontractor) working for them. As part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) has requested a lump sum as part of mitigation of \$75,000. Adcomm said the NEPA review is part of the initial scope, but the ongoing negotiations were not so there may be some additional costs with the consultants that will come in the future. We are looking for the Board to indicate the amount of money (limit) they are willing to pay in order to satisfy the negotiation. The alternative to this is a study which can be fairly intensive, and the advice received from legal was to engage in negotiations. This would also

avoid a significant delay. We are looking for authorization for Black Mountain Consulting to continue negotiating on behalf of the Board and the limit to which the Board is willing to pay.

Benton County Deputy Administrator Matt Rasmussen noted that the county has purchased hundreds of acres of conservation land on Badger and Candy Mountain over the years that has never been used. His thought was that perhaps the land could be used in lieu of cash. Benton County's Sustainable Development Manager, Adam Fyall suggested this might be an option. Drew Florence will coordinate with Black Mountain and report back.

Benton County Microwave System

**Discussion Items**

**Announcements**

The next Benton County Emergency Services Executive Board Meeting is scheduled on May 26, 2022, at 7:30 a.m. at the Richland City Shops Room 110.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

APPROVED:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Jon Amundson, BCES Executive Board Chair

Date Approved: 05/26/2022

ATTEST:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Carole Cimrhakl, BCES Board Secretary

Date Published: August 4, 2022