



March 14, 2018

## Emergency Medical Services Executive Oversight Board

### Minutes

#### Board Members in Attendance:

Executive Louws, *Chair*

Barry Buchanan, *Whatcom County Council*

Scott Korthuis, *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 (phone)*

=not present

#### Also Present:

Tyler Schroeder, *EMS Administrator*

Chief DeBruin, *WCFD 14*

Chief McLane, *WCFD 11*

Brian Heinrich, *City of Bellingham Admin.*

Tawni Helms, *Whatcom County Administration*

Mike Hilley, *WC EMS Manager*

Asst. Chief Hewitt, *COB/BFD*

Commissioner Bill Lee, *WCFD 11*

Jim Peebles, *Fire Chief's Association*

#### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Chairman Louws welcomed everyone and roundtable introductions took place. Hall Walker was able to participate via conference call. The Executive also introduced the new EMS Manager, Mike Hilley and the Board welcomed him to the community. Mr. Hilley comes to us with over 30 years of experience in first response. He lives on Camano Island, WA and has a Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership and a Master of Science in Emergency. He began his career as a member of the Coast Guard 1978-1989 and then as a Flight Medic in Alaska 1987-1995. For the last 25 years he's worked with the City of Redmond Fire Department as both the MSO and Battalion Chief. We are pleased to announce his employment as the first Whatcom County EMS Manager. Mr. Hilley provided more of his background and expressed his genuine enthusiasm for working in Whatcom County. He also shared his vision for the countywide EMS System which will begin with making connections with all of the stakeholders and developing a 2017 year-end report to establish baseline data going forward.

#### MINUTES APPROVED:

Chairman Louws recognized that, by affirmation of those present, the meeting minutes of December 6, 2017 were accepted into the record as presented.

#### EMS ADMINISTRATION REPORT:

With the selection of the new EMS Manager the County has been working with the Department of Emergency Management to identify space at the Whatcom Unified Emergency Coordination Center (WUECC) to house the new EMS Manager.

**WUECC Remodel:** Mr. Schroeder presented the proposed budget supplemental that was introduced to Council on March 13. This budget supplemental includes a plan to remodel the Whatcom Unified Emergency Coordination Center which will create sufficient space to accommodate the new EMS Manager as well as support staff. EMS Administration and the Department of Emergency Management have similar objectives working with first responders. Operating out of the same facility will help to

foster those connections and create encourage natural synergies. Two thirds (\$100k) of the project will be funded through the EMS Fund and the other one third (\$50k) will come from the County's REET 1 Fund because not all of the work is associated with EMS space expansion. The question was raised whether alternatives had been considered for housing EMS Administration. Chairman Louws responded that other county spaces were considered such as the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Civic Center, but none were proven optimum. Currently, the EMS Manager is housed in the Executive Office and will continue to work from there until space is made available at the WUECC. He also acknowledged that County owned space continues to be limited and at a premium.

Council will act on the proposed budget supplemental at their March 27<sup>th</sup> council meeting. Chairman Louws asked if there were any objections to the proposal and none were given.

**Paramedic Training:** Mr. Schroeder provided an update on the system's paramedic training needs. Bellingham Fire Department brought to the attention of the EMS Administration and the TAB the growing need for Paramedic Training due to impending retirements. Attrition costs were not budgeted in the ALS service agreement or as part of the Funding Work Group recommendations. He further stated that he was not calling for action at this time but wished to make the EOB aware of the issue.

Mr. Hilley reported that he recently met with Bellingham Technical College (BTC) administrator and TAB member, Therese Williams. She has been working with Bellingham Fire Department captain, Rob Stevenson to prepare for the paramedic accreditation process. Although the BTC paramedic training program had been accredited the accreditation lapsed due to no training programs being offered. Ideally, once the accreditation is secured for the program, classes can be offered regionally allowing the program to continue.

Mr. Schroeder indicated that this was a two-pronged issue. 1. A paramedic class needs to be established. 2. Funding needs to be determined for paramedic training. He reminded the Board that the Funding Work Group recommended an allocation of \$600k to implement the 5<sup>th</sup> medic unit and then increased it to \$1.2M to include training costs. He asked the Board to consider that the training needs presented by Bellingham Fire Department may be initiated from attrition but they may be attributed to training for the 5<sup>th</sup> medic unit scheduled for 2019. The question was raised about student eligibility and how many students to a class. The class size is limited to 6-9 students. The smaller class allows enough ride time on the medic units necessary for the students to achieve their certification. The class would be considered an open class and students would have to pre-qualify. If/when students come from out of county agencies they would lean on their systems for ride times, etc. The obligation is for the providers to work together to identify students who are motivated and highly qualified.

#### **COUNTYWIDE EPCR UPDATE:**

Mr. Hilley provided an update on the recently acquired countywide ePCR system. The work group is being assembled and meetings are being scheduled to begin tracking and planning the implementation schedule. There is great anticipation for the new system which offers a wealth of data: patient care, mapping integration, CAD, etc. The data collected by all agencies can then be compiled and used for system wide decisions. It's all very exciting and will bring us to the next level of professionalism.

#### **FINANCIAL REPORT - EMS Fund Projections:**

Mr. Schroeder distributed the fund balance report and reviewed ending fund balances. Looking at the increase in dispatch costs he reminded the Board that financial decisions have lasting impacts. Moving forward, it will be important to establish funding policies. Decisions have to be balanced with the

Funding Work Group recommendations (the Plan). Having clear, honest and transparent budget discussions will provide better understanding of the financial impacts of our decisions.

**QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD:**

None

**FINAL COMMENTS:** Rick Kowsky reported that they have been using Image Trend since 2016 and is exceedingly pleased with the product and the customer service. He also highly recommended power users or trainers to attend the upcoming Image Trend conference as he's attended and found it to be well worth the investment as one of the most impactful professional conferences he's ever attended.

With no other items to report the meeting was adjourned at 3:00.

**NEXT MEETING:**           **June 13, 2018 at 2:00 – 3:00 PM**  
                                  **Whatcom County Courthouse Conference Room 514**