

Washington County EMS Alliance



Washington County EMS Alliance Governing Board Meeting Minutes August 26, 2021

Attendance:

Member/Delegate			Back-Up Delegate	
Present	Name	Jurisdiction	Present	Name
X	David Downey	City of Hillsboro		Greg Espinosa
X	Patrick Wineman	City of Forest Grove		Patrick Fale
X	Sia Lindstrom (Chair)	Washington County		TBD
X	Rodney Linz	Banks Fire District		Brennan Nannenga
X	Deric Weiss	Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue		Steve Boughey

Other Interested Parties/Staff:

Adrienne Donner (WCEO), Jack Nuttall (WCEO), Tim Case (WCEO), Marni Kuyl (WCHHS), Ritu Sahni (WCEO), JD Fuiten (MWA), Shane Ryan (MWA), Kristin Chaffee (TVFR), Jennifer Reese (WCCCA) Mark Buchholz (WCCCA).

Summary of Actions and Decisions

1. Adoption of the Agenda
2. Review and approve July's meeting minutes
3. Strategic Direction
4. Workgroup Updates
5. EMS Staff Update
6. Round Robin Updates

Opening Comments

Sia Lindstrom opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Adoption of the Agenda

Sia Lindstrom reviewed the agenda and it was approved as is.

Review and Approve Minutes

Sia Lindstrom asked for a motion to approve or for changes to July's meeting minutes. Chief Weiss made a motion to approve as is and Chief Downey seconded the motion. All were in favor and the minutes were approved.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Strategic Direction

System Enhancement- Sia Lindstrom asked Chief Linz to provide an update on the funding request he had brought up at the last meeting. This funding was requested to support the purchase of new cardiac monitors for Banks Fire, Chief Linz had sought other funding resources and he is now bringing back what he was granted and what still remains as needed. The UASI group was able to provide \$13,000 and they were able to find more money within their district budget. Now they are still in need of \$40,000, down from the original \$70,000 they needed at the last meeting. Sia thanked Chief Linz and said they are now looking for approval to provide Banks with the remaining amount needed under system enhancements.

Sia Lindstrom mentioned their homework left from last meeting was for Chief Boughey to share how Clackamas County does their system enhancement funding requests. She said the document Chief Boughey shared was a very helpful document and she hopes



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everyone had a chance to see it. Sia mentioned they can use this method to establish their own. She asked if Chief Boughey was in the room – he was not – and Dr. Sahni said he could answer any questions regarding this process established by Clackamas County.

Dr. Sahni said the funds in system enhancement are transparent, everybody knows how much money is in this fund. Many years ago, there was a reduction in ambulance staffing, and this created savings. They took some of these savings and allocated them to system enhancement. The ambulance provider in Clackamas County places a monthly fee into the system enhancement funds, in return to have other staff to aid in proving a faster response time. That balance is known, and it is reported out. The Clackamas County EMS Council has a system enhancement sub-committee that decides when and how to use the funds. Dr. Sahni pointed out the criteria and questions they use on the provided document to determine if they will grant the funding. He said ultimately for these requests to be funded there needs to be an all system benefit. All fire agencies and ALS fire agencies, even the ones not incorporated, and AMR need to benefit. He added that it is meant for a one-time cost and not to maintain; the only exception is the multi-agency training amount they put aside. Dr. Sahni said this has been used for many different things and it has been very beneficial. One of the first things they used it for was to update their monitors back in 2005. It has also been used for AED placement throughout the community, a county wide chart system except for one agency that services four other counties, and for the first year of First Watch. He

mentioned that this has become a pretty significant fund and the amount that is placed into the fund is known by all.

Sia Lindstrom thanked Dr. Sahni for providing this group with the background of this fund and she said that the challenge for this group now is that they don't have their systems in place for this yet. She added that Chief Linz has now brought a funding request to them, when they are not quite ready in their processes. Sia invited Adrienne to share how much funding Washington County has and they are looking for a recommendation from the EMS Alliance. This would also pave the way into getting a process in place like the one Clackamas County has. Adrienne proceeded to explain they started this conversation in February 2021 and what Washington County has is some funding that has been cost saving from being understaffed for a while and also from staff being deployed to and funded under the COVID-19 response. What was proposed in February was to set a seed funding of \$200,000 or \$300,000 into this fund and then they would figure out how to use the funding. The WCEMS program's primary funding comes from the franchise agreement. Adrienne explained that they don't have an ongoing fund that could go into system enhancements. She suggested they seed it and figure out that process. Sia reiterated that they have the seed funding at their disposal and being that they are in the early stages of the EMS Alliance she feels strongly about obtaining a recommendation from the Alliance voting members. She invited them to voice their opinion. She added that having consistent cardiac monitors was made a priority by the EMS Alliance for the EMS system, which leads her to say that she thinks they should support this.

Chief Wineman had some questions. He asked how much money is available in the EMS seed money? Sia responded with \$200,000-\$300,000 and Adrienne explained there was no set amount yet as they are still developing a process. Chief Wineman asked Chief Linz to explain what the amount he is asking for and what he is purchasing. Chief Linz explain that they would like to do a single purchase of the monitors and equipment, to replace the outdated ones they have. They did not choose to go with an ALS 360 option as they cannot afford it, the cost is \$50,000 a year and they cannot sustain that. Chief Linz mentioned that they received \$93,500 from Senator Bonamici, \$12,300 from UASI reallocations grant and this leaves the \$40,000 for the six monitors they would like to purchase. Chief Wineman asked how Metro West and Banks deal with Medic Unit 13 and if Metro West provides equipment or just the vehicle? Chief Linz said they are using a training unit from Metro West on that vehicle until they can fund a monitor for that unit. He added that the majority of the equipment on that vehicle Banks Fire has placed and some has been placed by Metro West. Banks is responsible for the monitor on that vehicle and will return the borrowed one to Metro West when they purchase one for that vehicle.

Chief Weiss had some questions, he asked if the money committed by Bonamici was something they had yet? Chief Linz said their original request to Bonamici was for the whole amount and her committee had review and they approved this project. They reduced the amount to \$93,500 instead of the \$170,000 original ask. The final piece is the US House of Representatives needs to sign off on this and once they do the funding will be provided. Chief Weiss asked what the minimum amount of monitors they need was. Chief Linz said 4-6. They plan to place one in every rig. If they get 4, they will have to be moving one around constantly. Chief Weiss asked what the status of their

current cardiac monitors is? Chief Linz said that they are the Phillips MRX and they aren't having a lot of issues but some of them are greater than 12 years old. A board went out on one of them and they replaced it. The monitors have not seen the same use as some of the other agencies, but they are the same age and same issues as everyone else. Chief Weiss said the funding is Washington County dollars not EMS Alliance money, it's hard to vote as an EMS Alliance when its Washington County purchasing these monitors for Banks and not the Alliance. He made a point there is not a policy in place and that Banks Fire needing new monitors does help enhance the EMS system as a whole but it is not necessarily fair to the other agencies as there is no set procedure for these type of requests. Chief Weiss asked Dr. Sahni to talk about how Clackamas County makes the funding decision.

Dr. Sahni said in Clackamas County they will not fund a single agency; system enhancement is meant to be used in system wide benefit. Videoendoscopes was an example used, where they created a workgroup and did research. They decided as a group that they would do it and figure out the cost of putting this in every fire and EMS unit. They had enough funding to do it. One agency chose not to do that, and they were still allocated the same dollar amount per unit since they chose to go with a different type of unit. He reiterated that everything they have purchased with system enhancement funds has not ever gone to just one single agency. Chief Weiss said asked is there a way to move funds in that direction but have a plan for Banks to pay back? Would it be a better process to do this like a loan? Chief Weiss says he feels for the situation Banks Fire is facing but he knows there will be more cost in the future. He thinks maybe dispatch may need funding for different things and these changes made to dispatch will benefit the whole system. Chief Wineman asked Chief Linz about four vs. six monitors. He asked what the impact is if they go with five? Chief Linz said less risk, less chances to be at a place without a monitor.

Sia Lindstrom asked any other member or affiliate member to voice their opinion. Chief Downey said this is a tough position to be in. Hillsboro has a fund they use to buy things that are needed and there is a process to pay it back. Chief Downey voiced that he was torn between a decision; he agrees that system enhancement funds should be for the whole system and not just one agency, but they don't have a policy to say they cannot do otherwise. He wants to help Banks because he knows it's needed but also he doesn't want to create an expectation or practice. JD Fuiten said there was some restriction on these funds since some of them are Medicaid funds. He added that he doesn't think they need to be a part of this discussion, but he did want to bring this up. Sia thanked him for bringing this up and she checked with WCCCA. Mark Buchholz asked to pass.

Sia Lindstrom said because they don't have procedures in place yet, it does sounds like they are not in a place to make a recommendation yet. She did hear from everyone that system enhancement is for system wide value. She proposed what she took from all, which is to not use system enhancement dollars on this and to put it back on Washington County and figure out if they can figure out a different way to support Banks Fire without using the system enhancement dollars that they have allocated to seed. Adrienne, Marni and Sia will take it back and see what they can do.

Chief Downey's recommendation was to bring it back if they cannot find another path to fund this. Chief Linz was asked for a timeline and he responded that within the next month it should be okay. He said he appreciates everyone in the Alliance discussing this and he appreciated everyone's time and consideration on it. Sia Lindstrom said they will report back with what was done.

Standardized Kits- Sia Lindstrom proposed they give this to a sub-committee to get a recommendation for standardized kits. She asked for whoever brought this up to give some insight.

Adrienne said she brought this up due to the activity happening in Clackamas County and others like the City of Hillsboro who need to update their kits. Adrienne asked Chief Downey or Tim to give some background.

Chief Downey said he has spent some time discussing this with a committee and Hillsboro is playing catch up to some of the kits that already exist within the county. Hillsboro's EMS committee is on for standardization of the kits. Sia asked if a workgroup is needed to do some research and then to comeback with recommendation? Chief Downey said no, they are looking to go to the kits other agencies in the county are using. They believe with labeling all they will be easy enough for anyone to work right out of them. They will not be exact but very close. Dr. Sahni said there was a committee that does this work and what is needed from the Alliance is like they did for the monitors. If you need to get new kits to work with the EMS clinical strategic planning workgroup, part of the QI process, and all agencies are represented there. The kits mentioned by Chief Downey are what Clackamas and TVF&R currently use. Sia asked if they were ok to give this to the EMS clinical strategic planning workgroup also known as CSP? And the CSP would then bring this back to the EMS Alliance if there was anything the Alliance needed to act on. Chief Downey says he is good with the CSP taking this on, but he is in dire need of replacing his kits. Sia asked Dr. Sahni how long it would take to get a recommendation out to Chief Downey? Dr. Sahni said they can work on a recommendation fairly quickly with all they already have, He noted that the message he wants to be clear is they would like to have exact kits and not just close enough. Chief Linz asked for the CSP to share their kit findings with all. Sia asked if all agreed on this process? Things like this are to be put on the CSP to give recommendations and bring to the Alliance when needed. No objections. She thanked all for this discussion.

EMS Alliance Workgroup Updates

Regulatory Documents Review- Tim Case said the documents review work group has proposed changes to the Washington County Code that need further review or opinion from this group. He shared the proposed changes and related one pager with all.



1a.

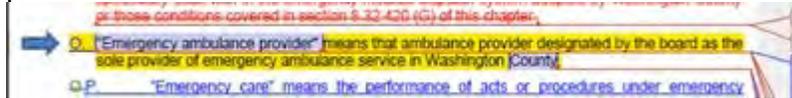


1b.

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He shared his screen. All changes are in blue, red and other colors are edits made by others. There were four spots in the County Code where they felt they needed further

discussion. First being as written and shown below, which only refers to ambulance provider.



The discussion in the group was that they are not the only emergency service transport and that there is also fire service ambulances that provide transport as well. There is no definition for them in Code and they are seeking input on how they define emergency provider, do they include fire in this, or do they create a new definition that includes fire. Chief Weiss asked if the fire ambulance transport appear anywhere else in this document? Tim said as it is no.

Kristin Chaffee added that going off of Chief Weiss' question, later in the document similar content comes up with the type of license the county can give out. It doesn't yet say Fire EMS unit. If it does end up on there, then you will need to have it in the definitions or if you going to say emergency providers of all types then the definition should read that. Tim thanked Kristin for clarifying this.

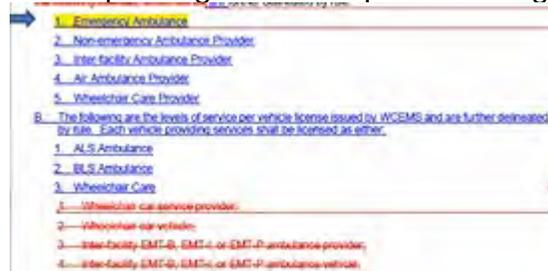
Chief Weiss asked what a flag drop. Tim said this was a topic of discussion within the workgroup as well. There was no good definition of a flag drop in the County Code. Tim thinks this is a surcharge added on by a taxi company to fares that are short.

Tim mentioned they tag these things in November or December of last year. The next line they tagged was specific to the Quality Improvement Committee:



This has yet to form and, therefore, this line is to remain pending until the Alliance initiates this subgroup. If this is the best definition for the group, they can leave or change it if change is needed. It is to reflect the essence of that committee. Both Sia and Adrienne made a comment that they like this vague definition because it gives the Alliance the autonomy to do as they need with quality improvement.

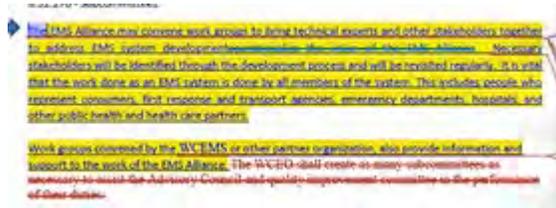
The next line discussed was specific to explaining how transport licensing is



distinguished amongst categories:

Tim asked if they should leave emergency ambulance as is or if they should create one for fire emergency ambulance? He asked if they should add another subsection for emergency fire ambulance or edit the current definition to show fire ambulance as an emergency ambulance. Chief Weiss asked if it was accurate to say Washington County licenses their ambulances? Tim said yes and Chief Weiss said yes, it should be added. Chief Wineman asked if Life Flight was licensed by Washington County and Tim said he was unsure. Chief Wineman believed fire ambulances should be listed as item six in section A. Kristin suggested they ask Gail to create a definition for them. Jack Nuttall

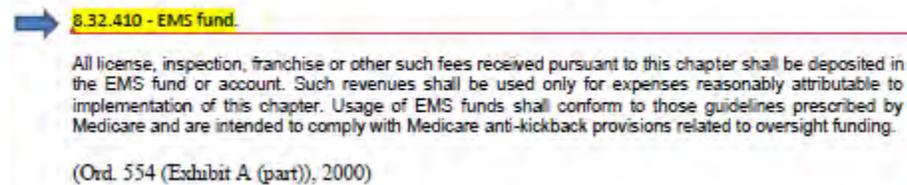
jumped on to clarify that the county does license Life Flight Network. Kristin asked if Emergency Ambulance line one should say Emergency Ambulance provider instead, since the definition has it as so. Tim said yes.



Tim moved on to the next section:

He said they had a conversation on the creation and function of subcommittees. As they discussed this, they felt it was more technical in directive. Kristin asked how this wording matches the language in the bylaws? And it may need to be compared. Tim said this was pretty close to the bylaws. Tim asked if there was agreement on this language, Chief Weiss said he was ok with it. Sia asked them to voice their opinion or she would assume they are ok with it. No one made a comment, Sia said they were okay to move on.

The last section was on the EMS fund:



Tim thinks this section still needs more work and asked if this definition gives them the groundwork to develop their rules? Sia said they should make the perimeters to something they can navigate and work with and not to make it too restrictive. Adrienne made a point that this is not system enhancement this is the EMS program budget. Sia asked if they added system enhancement to this, they would then have to mention it in here? Adrienne said, yes, depending on where the money came from. Marni asked if they want to say system enhancement funds will be kept separate and funds will be used upon a process decided by the Alliance, something that distinguishes the difference of this fund from the EMS program funds. Adrienne said she preferred nothing was added at this point and she doesn't think it needs to be added to the County Code. What they put in Code is binding. Sia said the question for all is if there is anything in this paragraph that would restrict their ability? Marni said the only thing that concerns her is the part that says guidelines prescribed by Medicare. Because she thinks they want more flexibility for the system enhancement funds and not to be restricted by Medicare rules and regulations. She suggested getting an attorney opinion on this. JD Fuiten said they do need Medicare in there as it is a source of revenue. Marni suggested keeping it separate and she gave an example of what if there were other contributed funds that weren't Medicare funds? They wouldn't want to be held to Medicare restrictions. JD agreed. Sia suggested they record this as a request from the EMS Alliance to consult with their attorneys on help on this language. The intent being that they intend to create a separate system enhancement fund. Adrienne's recommendation is to keep it as is as much as possible and word the Medicare part as appropriate. She said the wording could be figured out with an attorney so that they don't have the restriction. She said she would not put more wording in County Code as

it is binding. Sia asked if they understand the intent to this and they will provide it to their attorney to allow them the flexibility to create a system enhancement fund in the future. All voting members and affiliate members expressed agreeance. Sia said they would report back with what the attorney says.

Tim mentioned the workgroup finished the Admin Rules earlier this month and he is working on creating a document like he did here to bring back to this group.

Chief Weiss said he had a few more questions on the proposed code changes and he asked Kristin if she was in this committee and asked if he could give her his comments. Kristin said, yes. Tim invited them all to do the same. Sia asked if they need anything formal from them today? Adrienne said they do need approval on these changes as this is a step to move forward. The next step is to take County Code and Admin Rules to the Board of Commissioners. She said it would be best to have consensus on these changes and if more conversation was needed this would be ok. They need to come out of the next meeting with a consensus so they can go to the Board. Kristin asked if they could send the Admin Rules changes out ahead so the group can have time to review and comment. Adrienne said, yes, but warned all that the Admin Rules were much longer. Sia said her concern was they don't have final language on the funds section, Adrienne said it was ok to take final action in the next meeting.

Data- Chief Downey said he met with John at WCCCA about the data captured there. Now it's just a matter of how much they want to capture. He thinks he needs to meet with Jack and Dr. Sahni still, he believes there is some clinical level data already being captured but he doesn't know who would gather it to present it to this group. Sia said she was looking forward to seeing the data being presented.

Centralized Dispatch- Sia Lindstrom said they talked about getting a demo, but they will not be able to do this until they are in person again. She is looking forward to celebrating and seeing how it works. Chief Weiss said they had a great meeting yesterday and that some of the good is the work is done. There is some more to do and some testing to be done but they created a smaller subgroup to monitor some of the testing to see where they may have operational changes. They discussed some operational trainings that need to occur. Chief Weiss asked Shane Ryan if he missed anything and Shane said, no. he believes he got it all. Next meeting of the subgroup is next Thursday. Tests are only being run live on Metro West's CAD, so they are only allowed to test for 30 minutes at a time. Sia thanked them for the report.

EMS Staff Update

Adrienne Donner gave an update on EMS staff and said they were still down a staff member and they are going back to being pulled into COVID-19 work. She mentioned that some of the things they are doing right now include a major website overhaul. The county is going through an overhaul to improve the county site.

Round Robin Updates

Washington County- Sia Lindstrom mentioned they all turned their attention back to COVID-19 with the Delta surge. The Board made the decision to make masks mandated, which has not been done before. On September 7th the Board will be taking

on the recommendation made by the state in regard to the vaccine mandate for health care workers.

Hillsboro - Chief Downey said much the same - they are working their way through the vaccination mandate and their rate is 88%. It still leaves some as unvaccinated and the rules are what are; they will see where this takes them.

Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue - Chief Weiss said COVID-19 positive case 16 and 17 just came in. He asked if they all had the official mandate paperwork? They are working through that too with the union. He thinks this will be easier than the prior mandate that said get vaccinated or get tested. Chief Weiss said he received Adrienne's email from yesterday and that TVF&R will not be a booster provider. He noted they are not even doing their own boosters. They are hiring a third party that also does flu vaccine. They just can't do it right now.

Banks - Chief Linz said not much different than the County. He is looking to see how the vaccine mandate plays out. They are looking to see what the impacts are and how they can work with it.

WCCCA – Mark Buchholz said they are in it like everyone else and they have closed the facility to any outsiders. They have seen some impact on testing and are waiting for confirmations. They also received some emails from the County and emergency management asking for help as there are some 911 centers in Oregon left with as few as one person. They are trying to see if they can provide some help where they can.

Forest Grove, Gaston and Cornelius – Chief Wineman said they are working with their union on updates on COVID-19 rules and that it has taken much effort. Interim Chief Fale is returning to TVF&R and they are working on an adjustment plan.

Metro West Ambulance – JD Fuiten said they are working though the company wide process of vaccination. They have some parts that are at 50%. They are feeling the strain that all are feeling. They are not deploying any wildfire medical teams and are done for the season. They have to come back and pay more attention to what is happening close to home. He has seen a letter of resignation from a supervisor who is leaving so as to not getting vaccinated.

Dr. Sahni said the chief medial officers meet three times a week to have a situation update on hospitals. The numbers in the surge aren't like they had them in December or January time, where they had 60-70% COVID-19 patients. Right now it is more like 40%. The hospitals have been in a state of overbook. As an EMS system, they have having diversion. The number of hospitalizations right now is 1,143 patients with COVID-19. 315 in the ICU. With that being said, southern Oregon is getting hit the hardest. Dr. Sahni said he is happy to help answer any questions on the COVID-19 vaccine. Sia thanked him for his offer.

Public Comment

Sia Lindstrom welcomed public comment. There was no public comment.

Next meeting: September 23, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m., via Zoom

Good of the Order

There was no good of the order.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m. with the next meeting scheduled for August 26, 2021 at 1:00 p.m., via Zoom.

Minutes compiled by Gaby Rodriguez.