

Regular Meeting Minutes
Spokane Regional Emergency Communications Governing Board
January 18, 2024

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chief Cody Rohrbach called the meeting to order at 8:09 a.m. The following Board members were in attendance:

Board Members

Cody Rohrbach (Chair) – Spokane County Fire District 3
Chief Brad Richmond – Airway Heights Police Department (Vice Chair)
Chief Dave Ellis – Spokane Valley Police Department
Assistant Chief Tom Williams – Spokane Fire Department
Chief Frank Soto, Jr. – Spokane Valley Fire Department
Assistant Chief Howard Johnson – Spokane County Fire District 4
Scott Simmons – Spokane County
Gayne Sears – Citizen Representative

Staff

Lori Markham, Executive Director
Kim Arredondo, Deputy Director
Dusty Patrick, Technical Services Director
Jeff Tower, HR Manager
Tim Henry, Finance Manager
Heather Thompson, 911 Operations Manager
Brad Kane, Dispatch Operations Manager
Brandon Childs, Technical Projects Manager
Kelly Conley, Communication and Media Manager
Kari Kostelecky, Training Coordinator
Jenni Folden, Finance Analyst
Megan Schneider, HR Analyst
Bradley Dilg, CAD Administrator
John Grey, Fire Dispatch Supervisor

Auxiliary Partners/Guests

Lonnie Rash, SCFD8
Nathan Jeffries, SCFD9
Ken Johnson, SCFD 10
Brian Werst, WBM
Eric Olsen, SPD
Darrell
?

2. Consent Agenda

Once a quorum was in attendance, Scott Simmons motioned to approve the minutes from the December 21, 2023, regular meeting. Brad Richmond seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

3. Action Items

a. CAD Systems Infrastructure

Dusty Patrick explained the detailed quote was included in the Board packet and is to purchase hardware so SREC can support the new CAD system; it will be purchased off the NaSPO contract. It includes servers, networking gear, firewalls and storage; everything needed for SREC to support the system. It has been vetted by the CAD Administrators, Project Manager and will provide high availability across the two centers

(Combined Communications Building CCB and Backup Center BUC) and can be moved to the new facility. There is a 35-day lead time for the server equipment needed to build the system on, the networking gear is about 6 months out, going live is about 18 to 24 months out. The total cost is \$1,211,869.98 and has been budgeted for out of funds set aside for the new CAD system. Scott Simmons asked if the \$1.2M was out of SREC's budgeted portion of \$2.5M, or the total \$5M estimated for the system, and will it be used solely for SREC means, or other users as well. Lori Markham explained it will be utilized by other users if they decide to participate, but either way the equipment is needed and SREC will bill out accordingly. Once a quorum was in attendance Scott Simmons motioned to approve the purchase from Ednetics to support the CAD system. Brad Richmond seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

4. New Business

a. HB2258

Lori Markham explained this bill was brought forward last week and is intended to apportion the 911 excise tax and provide it to municipalities within a County to help support their phone system and call receivers. Lori added that a couple of SREC Board Members and general members were able to speak at the legislative hearing as to why the bill should not move forward. The bill, as written will impact not only Spokane, but many other Counties throughout the State. There was conversation to possibly narrow down the bill to only include Spokane, similar to HB1155. There will be further discussion on the possible impacts during closed session. Cody Rohrbach explained there was a meeting with Adam Wasserman at the State 911 Office where they discussed the intended use of those funds related to services currently being provided based on RCW language and a State paper released in December of 2021. Cody added that after reviewing the RCW's, all the agencies, including SPD, are receiving the full benefit of intent of use of those funds. Cody supports any agency having the right to choose to join the regional system, but when those choices impact all the other users inequitably then there are concerns and that is what this bill will do. Additionally, if the bill isn't good for the other jurisdictions in the State then it is not good locally, for those same reasons.

Lori furthered that the 911 tax is roughly over \$5M and is a stagnant tax, not moving one way or the other and is based off cell phones, landline and VoIP phones. The tax has not changed in many years even though the cost of doing business has increased and now no longer covers the intended costs; falling short of its intended use here and Statewide. Currently the difference is being made up by user fees and other means. Scott Simmons added the BoCC (Board of County Commissioners) during the legislative session, receives updates every Tuesday from the County lobbyists on legislative items and this bill was a discussion last Tuesday. The majority of the Board expressed their opposition to this bill as it undermines the intent and benefits of the entire system, and being part of the effectiveness of what an integrated system does. Scott shared with the BoCC some of the overviews of what it is used for and what the dollar amounts are that come through the County to SREC for those uses. There will be negative impacts if this bill is passed and decisions will need to be made. Cody added there was some discussions around HB1155 and where it stands today.

5. Old Business

a. New Facility Update

Lori Markham stated that Brian Werst has put her in contact with the project manager at the Spokane International Airport where they are using the alternative build project. Lori and Brandon Childs will meet with her to learn more about the process in the next couple weeks. Lori added the building committee will start meeting in the next month to get started.

b. CAD Update

Brandon Childs reiterated the lead time for the hardware, if ordered today is over a month. Currently the kickoff meeting is tentatively scheduled for mid-March, but if hardware is ordered today, delivered on time and configured, that kickoff date could be scheduled a couple weeks sooner. Build and core teams are beginning to be developed to include Fire and Law users.

c. Cheney Update

No further update.

d. HB1155 Update

Scott Simmons explained nothing has changed, it is the same as the last year and a half. The County presented the City of Spokane with an ILA back in October of 2022 and they have still not taken any action.

6. Staff Reports

a. Operations

Kim Arredondo explained dispatch has been working out of the BUC the last couple days as the sound barrier wall was being installed. Kim added that two report technicians started on the 8th and a new academy of four communication officers start on the 29th; there will be back to back classes in February to complete staffing for report technicians and 911. For situational awareness, a fire dispatcher resigned last night because they did not want to complete their proficiency hours in 911. Kim explained this is a hold over cultural piece that has been dealt with and shouldn't be an issue going forward.

The operations report shows 911 and crime check calls compared to last year as well as crime check and online reporting. The online reporting gap is closing, there were issues found with Coplogic and that is being resolved. Crime check live reporting is set to go live on February 19, 2024. A media push will go out prior to that. Cody Rhorbach asked if there was a correlation to the decrease in crime check calls and the increase in crime check reports. Kim answered there was an overall increase in calls, so there are probably multiple factors. Scott Simmons asked why only about 13% of crime check calls actually become reports. Kim stated that has been a consistent trend and that crime check is a popular number for citizens and a good resource for them, including priority 1 and 2 calls that really should have come in on 911, but well over 50% of the crime check calls do require a law enforcement response, they are just not emergent or a crime check report. SREC will continue to put out social media posts regarding the proper use of crime check and 911.

The law dispatch statistics page shows the top fifteen officer initiated call types, and the top fifteen overall call types for December 2023. Kim reminded the Board that member agencies can set up meetings with SREC to create personalized electronic dashboards. The next page reflects the amazing job the dispatch staff is doing and has a summary of some real crime center success stories. The final page shows SREC has an overall vacancy rate of 8%, the lowest it has ever been. Kim gave kudos to the CTO staff and supervisors as well as the HR team for getting these new employees hired, onboarded and in training. Kim introduced John Grey, fire dispatch supervisor. As a great example of the progression communications officers can take. John started in 911, became a CTO, promoted, then moved into Fire, trained and is now filling a supervisor position in Fire dispatch.

b. Technical

Dusty Patrick stated the IT Applications Manager position has been filled by Michelle Coker from SFD, who has 13 years of experience in IT with a background in data base administration, applications, business intelligence, system analysis, 24-hour operations and public safety. Dusty explained IT personnel were on site at the BUC to ensure the transition went smoothly over the last couple days while dispatch was working out of there. They were able to address any issues that came up. Work for the Broadline project began January 8th, installing equipment on the Coe Road tower. This began during the extreme cold snap, but will hopefully be wrapping up this week. All fire radios will be reprogrammed for some frequency changes, SFD has requested bigger changes, so the radio shop will be scheduling the different agencies.

Radio training was discussed at the last Regional Training Fire Chief's meeting and the radio shop was given permission to utilize SFD's audio visual department to create some video training to include radio refresher training for both law and fire agencies, how to deactivate your Emer button, etc. Joe Sacco has worked with some subject matter experts for some GIS support on enhancing the evacuation alerting that was rolled out this last summer. Feedback from field operations is coming in and will meet with them in the upcoming weeks, so implementation can be done by March and everything tested prior to fire season. There has been really good engagement on the evacuation alerting.

Scott Simmons asked that Dusty let him and Tessa Sheldon know when the Broadline project is complete as there are some billing triggers on the County side. Gayne Sears stated having to work out of the BUC while the wall was being installed is a great opportunity to ensure everything is functioning properly. Dusty explained Fire dispatch tests the BUC quarterly and IT routinely runs updates there. Lori Markham reminded the Board that SREC is the only Communication Center in the State to have a fully functioning BUC and is very grateful to Fire District 9 for their hospitality and support. Ideally, the goal is to make the current CCB the BUC when SREC moves to its new facility.

c. Finance

Tim Henry stated work continues on year-end and recording 2023 expenses. Year-end also includes W2s, 1099s, year-end payroll, liabilities, reconciliations, closing out purchase orders and incumbrances. There will be roughly \$2M in excess and a final number will be reported out as soon as it is available. Lori Markham thanked the finance team for the amazing job they do.

d. Human Resources

Jeff Tower stated he has the quarterly meeting tomorrow with WCIA on what the insurance rates for 2025 will be. The rates have not been great lately due to verdicts against law enforcement agencies in the State. At the end of the month there is a meeting with WCIA to discuss cyber security and cyber security insurance. Jeff stated SREC should not have any problems as there are consistence trainings and SREC has participated in tabletop exercises.

e. Administration

Lori Markham stated SREC has purchased a new scheduling software that will better integrate with SREC's needs; it also includes an app that employees will have access to whenever they need it. Lori added that with the completion of the sound barrier wall in dispatch, hopefully some positive cultural shifts will begin.

7. Open/Public Comment

No open/public comment.

8. Closed Meeting to Discuss Matters with Legal Counsel Related to Potential Litigation and Financial Risks.

As allowed by RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i), it is unknown if the Board will take action.

Chair Rohrbach closed the meeting at 8:53 a.m. and estimated the Board would open the meeting in 20 minutes.

At 9:13 a.m. the Board announced the session would be extended 10 minutes.

At 9:23 a.m. the Board announced the session would be extended 5 minutes.

The meeting moved to open session at 9:29 a.m.


9. Adjourn

Adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

The next Regular Governing Board meeting is scheduled for February 15, 2024, at 8:00 a.m.



Board Member
Governing Board



Board Member
Governing Board