

Regular Meeting Minutes  
Spokane Regional Emergency Communications Governing Board  
May 16, 2024

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Lori Markham called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and stated there was not a quorum present, so the meeting will remain open and no business conducted until there is a quorum which is expected around 9:00, 9:15 a.m. Quorum was reached at 9:24 a.m. The following Board members were in attendance:

Board Members

Chief Cody Rohrbach – Spokane County Fire District 3 (Chair)  
Chief Brad Richmond – Airway Heights Police Department (Vice Chair)  
Sheriff John Nowels – Spokane County Sheriff's Department  
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  
Maggie Yates – City of Spokane  
Gayne Sears – Citizen Representative

Staff

Lori Markham, Executive Director  
Dusty Patrick, Technical Services Director  
Tim Henry, Finance Manager  
Jeff tower, HR Manager  
Heather Thompson, 911 Operations Manager  
Brandon Childs, Technical Projects Manager  
Kelly Conley, Communication and Media Manager  
Kari Kostelecky, Training Coordinator  
Erin Lowe, Training Administrator  
Jenni Folden, Finance Analyst  
Megan Schneider, HR Analyst  
Bradley Dilg, CAD Administrator  
Kristena Breeze, QA Supervisor  
John Grey, Fire Dispatch Supervisor  
Kelli Mehaffey, 911 Supervisor  
Bre Kostelecky, Public Records Specialist

Auxiliary Partners/Guests

Jeff Galloway, WBM  
Don Malone, SCFD10

**2. Consent Agenda**

Lori Markham explained the minutes have been amended. The name Katie Dodson has been corrected to Katie Johnston under auxiliary partners/guests. Howard Johnson motioned to approve the minutes as amended from the April 18, 2024, regular meeting. Brad Richmond seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

### 3. Action Items

#### a. BARS Report

Lori Markham explained the report was included in last month's Board packet and today's packet. Lori stated she has received no feedback or comments and the report needs to be submitted to the State Auditor's Office by the end of May. Scott Simmons motioned to approve submission of the report to the State Auditor Office. Tom Williams seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried. Lori thanked Tim Henry and Jenni Folden for the great work they do every year on the BARS report.

### 4. New Business

No new business.

### 5. Old Business

#### a. New Facility Update

Lori Markham stated the RFQ (request for quotes) for the owner's representative went out last Friday and will remain open until June 4, 2024. The building committee will then review the quotes and schedule interviews. Lori and legal counsel will be meeting with the County to discuss zoning issues with the property and hopefully get a draft lease for the Board next month. Scott Simmons explained the PRC (project review committee) reviews applications every other month with the application being due the month prior. Lori explained her and Brandon Childs will be observing a PRC meeting next week, and once the owner's rep is on Board will get the application submitted for August.

#### b. CAD Update

Brandon Childs stated the hardware stage of the project should be completed today. John Collins and Bradley Dilg have been building the virtual servers which includes twenty-four primary sites and thirty-four secondary sites. The production side of all the servers is fully redundant, highly available and load balanced. The next phase is software installation and GIS for mid-June. There are workshops scheduled for the beginning and end of June.

#### c. Cheney Update

Lori Markham stated Cheney is still working on getting their access situation figured out and are meeting with Lincoln County. Lori added due to some staffing issues Cheney may need to come on board before everything is in place, SREC will continue to prepare. Scott Simmons explained the County has drafted an ILA for Cheney for their CAD access. There were some other records issues with Cheney that the County directed them to discuss with Hexagon or another solution as the County will no longer be using Tyler New World once the new CAD system is in place.

#### d. City Update

Cody Rohrbach explained there was a meeting on Monday with elected officials, including Mayor Lisa Brown and Commissioner Mary Kunej to discuss the letter sent by the SREC Board to the City of Spokane. The topics in question from the City of Spokane continue to center around governance, finances, and level of service. From that meeting Cody anticipates there will be a request for an extension for the City of Spokane to provide an answer to the SREC Board. Maggie Yates stated that Commissioner Kunej had recommended a three-month extension in that meeting for the City to get clarity on the three topics. Scott Simmons recommended a formal request from the City to the SREC Board, keeping the dialogue open and clarity on what the City is requesting. Maggie stated she believed the discussion today was about the three-month extension. Cody clarified a formal request in writing would be helpful in informing the SREC Board on making a decision to grant an extension but would also entertain a motion to have

that discussion today. Cody added it would be helpful to know the nature of the request related to timing and what would be accomplished during that time if the recommendation is to change the deadline. John Nowels stated the letter was written because the SREC Board is frustrated, the items being asked for and to be reviewed have been the same things SREC has provided and been waiting on an answer from the City for over three years. John would like a letter outlining why the three-month extension and what is going to be done different during this extension than during the past several years. Maggie explained the City has looked at the financial arrangements with SREC and is now looking at the financial requirements of being all in or all out. It is the all-out scenario that takes more time to analyze. Maggie asked for clarity on the deadline of May 24, 2024, for a response from the City and how that works with the timing and the deadline.

Frank Soto, Jr. stated he is a hard no on the extension. He explained this is completely ridiculous and has been going on for five years. Frank continued that in February of last year the SREC Board was in the same place and the City asked for another extension at that time. The SREC Board needs to hold fast to the timeline, there are budgets to prepare and business to be conducted. Frank explained he is happy to talk with any of the Commissioners, but the decision needs to be made, either the City is on or it is out. Lori Markham explained that the May 24, 2024, deadline was provided, assuming that there may be questions, but if SREC is looking for a clean cut for January 1, 2025, then a six month out is required per the service level agreement (SLA) with the Spokane City Fire Department, so could maybe provide another month. Additionally, if a three-month extension is granted, SREC is looking at preparing two budgets or telling member agencies that their user fee numbers are going to be late, which in turn keeps those agencies from preparing their budgets in a timely manner. Lori continued that this has been done the last three to five years and there is not an option to just not do it this way as SREC, nor the member agencies, can plan accordingly going forward. Lori furthered this creates additional work and planning for SREC staff, what does the new facility look like, the new CAD system, etc., the longer this decision is delayed the longer the delay is for SREC to move forward, in addition to the additional work for staff. The past five years has just been an exercise in the additional work with more confusion and no real outcome. Lori reiterated that a decision needs to be made sooner rather than later for the sake of the employees in the building, all the employees, to give them a sense of closure and answers; this is continually creating tension and fear for not only SREC employees but SPD as well. Lori added that this is now the third administration that has told SREC they will have answers, they just need more time. Maggie responded that she understands the frustration and the Mayor is doing her due diligence to ensure the arrangement benefits City residents and City taxpayers. Maggie furthered that from the administration's standpoint it is exercise they need to go through and it is time and resource intensive, which is the basis for the extension.

Maggie asked Cody if it would be best to make a motion to extend the deadline and get a sense from the Board on what is reasonable or what is not or continue the conversation. Cody explained one option would be to make a motion and get the current position of the Board. The other option would be to get something formal in writing that would provide clarity on timeframe and what would be accomplished during that timeframe. Cody added that in order to move the discussion further in a formal matter a motion or letter is needed. If there is a formal letter submitted than that would fall between now and the next regular scheduled meeting, so a special meeting of the SREC Board would need to be called in order to respond. Scott Simmons stated a formal letter from the City would be the best option as it gives the Board a chance to consider what specifically the City is asking for and include definitive dates. Scott did not recommend making a motion today. Maggie made a motion for the SREC Board to approve a three-

month extension for the City to evaluate both the cost models of being fully in or fully out of SREC as presented in the letter from the SREC Board. Tom Williams seconded. Brad Richmond asked for clarity of the SLA and the parameters of the six month out if an extension is granted. Lori explained that if an extension is granted, it just extends the six months into the following year by however long the extension is, so you have one member only a part of SREC for one, two or three months of the next year, which muddies the waters, especially with agencies user fees and creates more work and more confusion. Gayne reminded the Board that this has been done before, so not unheard of. Frank asked if there would be anything on the request that would state this is the final request. Frank added if the three months is granted what happens when the three months is up and they request another extension. Frank continued that he came from a much larger City, and this is all about the City wanting to run the show and having the biggest piece of the pie. The bottom line is if we are going to allow a three-month extension then there needs to be verbiage stating this is the final extension period, we are not having this discussion again. Gayne stated she disagrees with Frank that everyone agrees on this. Frank replied that is fine, but there is a business to run and we need to run it, this has gone on long enough.

Dave Ellis stated he was not aware of the meeting earlier in the week with the City, but he hasn't heard of any indication the City wants this and is working toward this, and that concerns him. Cody explained he would not characterize the meeting as the City wanting to get there, nor would he characterize it as they don't want to get there. Cody added that as being a part of the history back to the 911 Policy Board and the inception of SREC, he feels this was the first time there were actually decision makers in the room and sees that as progress. Cody clarified that if an extension is granted what would be accomplished, what are the desired end states, and how do we get out of the status quo; how do we get to a decision so both agencies can plan for their futures. We are now seeing the downstream impacts of remaining status quo, what size will the facility be, will we be on different CAD systems, how delayed will user fees and budgets be. Cody asked if Maggie wanted to amend the motion to provide clarity related to Frank's remarks. Scott added the meeting with the elected officials was more of a listening meeting rather than a working meeting. Scott furthered it was the first time they were able to hear directly from the City. Some of the statements made by the Mayor were: the County recently signed a resolution that the Sheriff's Department no longer had to pay user fees, Scott clarified that is not true; the City is double paying for user fees; the City wants more representation on the SREC Board based on the 50% call volume; the City wants greater access and insight into the finances of SREC; and the City was questioning the appropriateness of the reserve balance and the need for a new facility. Maggie clarified there were questions about how the new facility would be financed, not the facility itself. Maggie added the Mayor articulated her appreciation for the regional model and the strengths of the regional model but needs to do her due diligence that the current operations are the best for City residents and taxpayers. John stated that though there is a motion on the floor it is more appropriate to have a written response from the City detailing the items being talked about now. John believes ninety days is too long and puts everyone too far behind, if the motion is amended to include a written response and adjust the timeline then maybe he would consider it, but as the motion stands now, he is a nay. Howard Johnson stated he agreed with John. Howard explained that understanding the City's perspective and the new administration wanting more time, he sees the frustration and is not willing to ask the member users and SREC staff to do the additional work; they keep doing the additional work and keep doing the additional work and it hasn't moved anything forward. Howard agrees there needs to be something in writing from the City and the timeline needs to be adjusted because three months will not work. Dave stated he agreed with John and Howard. Scott asked Jeff Galloway what the correct procedure is as it seems there may be two potential

amendments to the motion on the floor now, one from Frank that it is only a three-month extension and one from John that requires a letter from the City before the Board considers a motion. Jeff stated there is a motion on the table that has been seconded, so that needs to be voted on unless Maggie wants to amend it. Recommendations for additional motions can be addressed after that. Cody asked Maggie that based on the discussion and opinions of the Board members, if she would like to amend or withdraw her motion. Maggie stated she preferred to vote on the motion as proposed. Cody reiterated the motion is for a three-month extension from the May 24, 2024, deadline. Cody asked who was in favor of the three-month extension. Maggie and Tom were in favor. Cody asked for those opposed; John, Howard, Scott, Dave, Frank, and Brad were opposed. Cody stated he was opposed for the reason there is no clarity on what would be accomplished but would be open to defined timelines with specified outcomes. Motion does not carry. John explained he did not feel it was appropriate for him or any of the other Board members to make a motion requiring a written response but wants to be clear that a written response detailing why the extension, what is to be accomplished and a different timeline, could get to a yes. Cody furthered that it seems there is more support with defined outcomes and timelines. Scott agreed with Cody and having something in writing from the City with what they are formally asking and what is expected to be done during that timeframe would be helpful. The group agreed that if a written response was received from the City, they would make themselves available for a special meeting.

Cody explained the topic of Board composition continues to come up and wanted to provide insight into the history of how the composition was constructed. Cody stated that from inception, the consultant De Hicks PhD., was brought in and worked on best practices for Board composition and at that time the City of Spokane was at the table, different people than now, but the City was at the table and part of the discussion and decisions made regarding Board composition. The outcome was based on best practices around the nation, and concepts around non-electeds with narrow exception, i.e., the Sheriff. The Board composition has changed slightly based upon Spoken Fire being in and Spokane Police being in or out, but as originally designed with the City of Spokane (Police and Fire) being a member of SREC, had three positions on the Board, the City Administrator, Police Chief and Fire Chief. Cody added that the decision of the makeup of the SREC Board lies solely with the BoCC (Board of County Commissioners), so the SREC Board has remained neutral, but at the meeting on Monday, Commissioner Kuney stated the BoCC would like recommendations from the SREC Board on composition to help their decision-making process. Cody stated there were potential alternatives to deciding Board makeup brought up at that meeting related to call volume. Cody explained he could see a lot of different scenarios on how that would play out and the Board would most likely have different levels of support. The question is do we go strictly off of call volume and a proportional number of positions based on that (City is at 58%), or population which would tip it the other way, County at 58% and City at 41%, and this would apply not only to the City of Spokane but each individual agency. Cody added if SPD does join then the Police Chief position comes back to the Board. Cody believes that clarity from the City would be helpful because as he sees it, if they are asking for a true 58% Board representation, that's less likely to get support from the Board then maybe asking for a fourth position, if all in. John stated no entity should have control over the Board, that is not how Boards are supposed to operate. John explained Spokane has a long history of putting Boards together where there are unanimous votes, including the SREC Board, and no one wants a scenario where anyone on the Board feels like they are at the whim of someone else. No one wants to govern that way, no one should have that kind of authority or autonomy. John gave the example of the Regional Drug Task Force, where they have multiple entities, City and County, and have always had a unanimous vote on any issue that has come their way, and that should be

the goal of the SREC Board as well, not one entity can overrun anyone else; otherwise, politics comes into play and things fall apart. Maggie clarified the City isn't seeking 58% representation corresponding to call volume, but more along King County's Board composition: one part looking at attendance and quorum and the other on a 60% call volume representation; right now the SREC Board is a 70% majority vote for final action. Maggie suggested an alternative model for the SREC Board to consider would be a 70% vote based on call volume versus Board seats, which would not be a strictly City vote. Maggie added she appreciates the push for consensus and unanimity in the votes but wants to make sure when there is a concern by the City that they have the ability to articulate and advocate for that based on the financial stake and significant call volume by the City. Lori asked Maggie to clarify which Communications Center in King County she was referring to. Maggie stated it was King County, not Seattle and would send it to Lori. Cody summarized that based on the conversation the SREC Board is opposed to any one entity having a majority vote, and if there are suggestions for a different model to be considered regarding Board composition that the City would like the SREC Board to recommend to the BoCC, that should also be put in writing. Gayne stated the goals of an Emergency Communications entity are tight and headed in the same direction, so the potential for votes that didn't move in that direction would be pretty low. Cody reiterated what John stated, that in the history of SREC the Board has been unanimous in its decisions except for this topic. Lori clarified that since Gayne's position (Citizen representative) is not a voting position, it is not 70%, but rather seven out of the nine voting positions for final action. Lori summarized that the Board is looking for a written response from the City which includes, timelines and official requests of what they are wanting and there is potential for a special meeting based on the response to have discussions.

## 6. Staff Reports

### a. Operations

Heather Thompson explained the nurse navigation line has a go-live date of June 18, 2024, and training materials were sent out to staff yesterday. Lori Markham thanked everyone for all their work getting this in place and working through the issues, it is not a perfect model, but will get us through until the new CAD system is in place.

Heather reviewed the operations report and stated call volume and report numbers are staying consistent but as we get into the summer months hold times may increase. The top fifteen officer-initiated call types listed represent 81% of officer-initiated calls and medics is the number one call type overall. Surveys continue to be sent out with all online and Crime Check reports. There have been over nine hundred responses and over 85% are very satisfied or satisfied with the time it took, over 87% are very satisfied, or satisfied with the process. The Crime Check survey results showed over 86% were very satisfied or satisfied with the quality of customer service they received. The area of focus is still on making sure citizens know what the next steps are after filing the report; they receive an email that includes their report number, a link and a list of additional steps. EMD statistics reflect time for hands to chest are at 57 seconds for the year-to-date average. Heather explained another PSAP's annual report stated how excited they were at their 93 second average, SREC is almost double (taking almost half the time) of what priority dispatch states as the goal average in seconds. Lori Markham added that the Sheriff's Citizen Advisory Board was at SREC on Monday, one of the Board members works with UW Medical School, in particular pediatric CPR rates, looking at a lot of data and is extremely impressed with SREC's 57 seconds and that they should be extremely proud of that. Heather continued there is an overall vacancy rate of 10%, 911 employees are being encouraged to move into dispatch and there is a new academy of four starting on June 3, 2024. Heather reminded the group that if there are any agencies that want their own dashboard for statistics like these please reach out.

b. Technical

Dusty Patrick stated fire programming continues. Once complete the radio shop will follow up with radios that either weren't able to be located, not assigned, etc. to help recover those. The GIS team is on track to have evacuation alerting and mapping complete in time for fire season. The GIS team is also working on staging servers and licensing for the new CAD system. The IT team is preparing and evaluating for a phone system upgrade that is part of the maintenance contract and will hopefully be accomplished in January of 2025. One of the possible new features could include being able to take calls at the CCB and BUC simultaneously, currently that is not possible.

There was a geothermic storm this weekend which raised concerns of potential problems or interference with the radio or computer systems. The radio and IT teams were monitoring closely and prepared in case the need arose, but there were no issues. Dusty explained they will continue to monitor as there is a prediction of another storm in the next coming weeks. Cody Rohrbach stated he appreciated the writeups and responses that came from it, on the Fire side. Cody furthered there was some discussion knowing it was a low probability of having an impact, but of high consequence if communications were lost. Cody suggested that the operational groups discuss what the fallback plan is in a worst-case scenario event when communications are lost and formalized that plan so everyone is operating from the same play book. Dusty stated the radio shop has been invited to a Sheriff's leadership training class later this month to give a 30-minute presentation on the radio system, how it's used, lessons learned from the fires last year and the capabilities of the system. Dusty added the radio shop continues working on training videos that can cover topics like redundancies and worst-case scenarios, etc.

c. Finance

Tim Henry stated the BARS report will be filed with the State Auditor's Office and the team will begin preparing for the audit kickoff and engagement letter. The 2024 budget is being monitored and budget to actual reporting. Tim explained that the 2025 budget development is on hold due to the nondecision by the City, but in the meantime the Executive team is reviewing and compiling the information they do have. Tim added that the County had requested some data and that has all been fulfilled.

d. Human Resources

Jeff Tower stated there are three background interviews this week, so hopefully there will be more than four new hires for the June academy. The personnel audit with WCIA was submitted and now just waiting for feedback. Tomorrow is the quarterly WCIA meeting to get an idea of what insurance rates will be for 2025. Contract negotiations will begin after Memorial Day, the first meeting will be with the baseline group and then the supervisor group.

e. Administration

Lori Markham stated the County emergency preparedness assessment was yesterday which was beneficial to hear feedback and provide insight. Additionally, the Spokane County Citizens Advisory and Review Board visited SREC on Monday where they had great discussions, especially around Crime Check, and took a tour of the facility. Lori added that SREC has been able to meet with that group as well as the Fire Commissioners group, several City Council members which have been very beneficial. Lori encouraged the group that if there is anyone from your agencies or groups you want to come get a more in-depth idea of what SREC does, get a tour, etc., please reach out

to her or Kelly Conley. These meetings are a great way to have more informed discussions with citizens about SREC and hear feedback and suggestions.

Lori explained CTO Michelle Tinsley received the EMS Council's Dispatcher of the Year Award on Tuesday. Michelle received this award based on a call she took where during that call she helped deliver a baby and that baby is doing very well. Michelle has been with SREC for six years and helps teach our new academies. Lori congratulated Michelle and thanked her for all her hard work and service.

**7. Open/Public Comment**

No open/public comment.

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

No closed session.

**9. Adjourn**

Adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

The next Regular Governing Board meeting is scheduled for June 20, 2024, at 8:00 a.m.



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Board Member  
Governing Board



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Board Member  
Governing Board