

Regular Meeting Minutes
Spokane Regional Emergency Communications Governing Board
November 21, 2024

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chief Cody Rohrbach called the meeting to order at 8:00 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)
Undersheriff Michael Kittilstved – Spokane County Sheriff's Department
Assistant Chief Sean Walter – 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
Kim Arredondo, Deputy Director
Dusty Patrick, Technical Services Director
Heather Thompson, 911 Operations Manager
Brandon Childs, Project Manager
Jeff Tower, HR Manager
Kari Kostelecky, Training Coordinator
Kelly Conley, Communication and Media Manager
Megan Schneider, HR Analyst
Jenni Folden, Finance Analyst
Breann Kostelecky, Public Records Specialist
Bradley Dilg, Sr. CAD Administrator

Auxiliary Partners

Brian Werst, WBM
Jeff Galloway, WBM
Michael McNab, SPD
Kim Blashill, SPD
Todd Pouncey, SPD
Don Malone, SCFD10
Mike Kester, SVFD
Erik Lamb, Spokane Valley
John Guarisco, SVFD
Patrick Burch, SVFD
Scott Campbell

2. Consent Agenda

Gayne Sears asked that the proposed governance model referenced multiple times in the minutes be included. Brad Richmond motioned to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2024, regular meeting with the proposed model attached. Tom Williams seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

3. Action Items

a. New Facility Closing

Lori Markham explained that this item will be moved to next month. During this final week of due diligence an item came up on the seller's side that needs to be addressed before closing. The goal is to still close and take possession by end of year, but they are extending the sixty-day due diligence time frame, but it is on the seller's side, not the fault of SREC.

b. National Public Safety Group (NPSG) Contract Renewal

Lori Markham explained that NPSG is the company SREC utilized to help procure the CAD vendor and work through the process until go live. Go live is still expected for October 2025, but we have used up all the payment schedules in the current contract with NPSG. The first few months will be \$8,000 then increase to \$12,000 with greater workload. Lori is asking the Board to approve the renewal of the contract for twelve months and the contract can be terminated prior to that once we go live. Lori reminded the Board the NPSG has fought and worked very hard for SREC through this whole process. Brad Richmond motioned to approve the renewal of the NPSG contract. Howard Johnson seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

c. SCGI Contract Renewal

Kim Arredondo explained that SREC has used SCGI for several years as consultants for various formats; culture, coaching SREC's leadership team, staff, etc. Kim added the contract is down from previous years as SREC would not be utilizing them as much. This contract will include the Board retreat, leadership training, coaching during a 12-month period that can be shifted around the building to each discipline, strategic planning, etc. Kim is asking the Board's approval to renew the contract with SCGI. The contract is for \$78,500 and is included in the 2025 budget. Brad Richmond motioned to approve the renewal of the SCGI contract. Frank Soto seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

d. Radio Site T1 to Ethernet Upgrade (Hoodoo and SIA)

Dusty Patrick explained this will upgrade the backhaul at the Hoodoo and SIA (Spokane International Airport) and bring all the sites up to this MPLS backhaul which is required for the system upgrade in March. This is included in the 2025 approved budget for just over \$365,000 and has gone through the radio and finance subcommittees. This upgrade brings the sites to a new protocol that is more scalable and sustainable, better bandwidth, reduces network congestion, goes from 3MB to 45MB per second at these two sites, and a better user experience. Backhaul can be defined as providing bandwidth to the sites. Brad Richmond motioned to approve the purchase. Howard Johnson seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

4. New Business

a. Q3 Board Report

Scott Simmons presented the Q3 Board report. Sales tax is still trending below budget, and expects that to continue, the County is still seeing softness and trending under 1% growth. This trend is expected to continue which is why next year's budget is flat. The 911 excise tax is also trending slightly below budget and expected to trend the same next year. Charges for services are trending slightly ahead of budget due to timing of receiving user fees. Interest income is trending positive due to the balances invested but could be reducing in the next year or so.

Expenses in salary and benefits are coming in below budget but are closer to budget than in the past as staffing increases. Expenses and encumbrances are coming in a little under budget but is affected by timing and expected to balance out over the year.

5. Old Business

a. New Facility Update

Lori Markham explained that the RFQ went out and there has been a good response. Lori added the final thing they are waiting on before taking position is on the seller's side and it includes a vote from the business park. Lori explained the technology in the building is very robust and cannot wait to get in.

b. City of Spokane Update

Cody Rohrbach explained a couple things have happened since the last meeting. The BoCC (Board of County Commissioners) voted in support of the recommendation from the SREC Board and the proposed governance model of adding the Spokane Police Chief under a fully regionalized model. There was a transition meeting scheduled for the week of Veteran's Day, but that was cancelled. Since then, the transition committee received correspondence from the City of Spokane. That correspondence was addressed to Scott Simmons, the CEO of Spokane County, who then shared the letter with the transition team yesterday. There was discussion yesterday with legal counsel (Brian Werst and Jeff Galloway), and would like to discuss today as a Board, who the letter was addressed to and who should respond. Issues to respond to include who should provide the formal response and consistent with continued talks with the City, governance, service levels and finance. Part of the correspondence could include discussions surrounding jurisdictional authorities for some of the asks, which Cody will let Jeff Galloway expand on later. Cody reminded the group that the authority of governance lies solely with the BoCC and the service level and finance decisions lie with the SREC Board. Cody would like input from the SREC Board, so the transition committee clearly understands the Board's intent. The correspondence includes proposals for mediation and facilitation and the Board needs to be clear on what those things mean. There is also a proposal for three half-day meetings and a formal agenda. Jeff clarified the letter is dated November 15th from Mayor Brown to Scott Simmons in his capacity as CEO of the County and it asks for mediation on three topics; one on governance structure, which SREC cannot mediate on, two regarding financial structure and three, on service level needs. The BoCC, per SREC's bylaws do not have authority over SREC's finances or service levels (section 3.8 and 3.9). There is a deadline to respond in the letter of tomorrow, seven calendar days, which would be November 22nd. Jeff recommends that since the letter was addressed solely to Scott Simmons as CEO and only provided to this group yesterday, is to digest the letter and understand what the City is asking for and how does the SREC Board want to respond. Maggie Yates stated the Mayor understands the bifurcation of roles and responsibilities of jurisdiction between the County Commissioners and the SREC Board which is why the letter was addressed to Scott, in his dual role, and why there are County Commissioners and SREC representatives on the transition team. The intent is to be forward thinking and problem solving as the transition meetings thus far seem to cover the same ground over and over and would like to move this forward to resolution.

Cody explained as the Board Chair and sitting on the transition team he represents the entire body, including the City of Spokane positions and wanted to ensure he got clarity from this group. Cody reiterated the topic of governance has been established by the SREC Board and the BoCC, that decision has been made and is now an opportunity to inform the City and determine if that is an impasse that can't be overcome. The next discussions are then with those items that sit with the SREC Board, finances and service levels. Cody furthered that at the last transition meeting a draft SLA (service level

agreement) was asked for and once those service levels conversations can happen that can then be applied to the financial piece. The correspondence also asks for a formal agenda which Cody agrees is a great idea, where both sides can add to it. Facilitation could be helpful, whereas mediation has a different meaning and would need to know exactly what that means before stating an opinion one way or the other. Cody added the three half-day meetings could be productive, facilitation could be good, and an established agenda could all be productive. Cody stated he believes there is also different intent behind the meetings, one as negotiation meetings and the other as transition meetings. Frank Soto stated the letter from the Mayor is a negotiation, mediation is a negotiation. Frank continued that section c states that the final but most important obstacle to consolidation is guaranteeing that SREC will mirror SPD's dispatch model. Frank doesn't believe adding three half-day meetings will fix this. Frank's recommendation is to part ways now, this will never end. Frank asked are we negotiating or are they joining SREC. Lori Markham reminded the group that at the last meeting she specifically asked that question as her understanding from the August Board meeting was that SPD is joining and these are transition meetings and the City representatives answered, it was a negotiation. Frank stated, then let's just move on without them. You are joining a County asset just like everyone else and reminded the group that if you open up negotiations for one then you open it up for all. Scott explained that from the SREC and BoCC representatives the intent and the language has always been transition. There has been a lot of discussion around governance and that was holding up discussions on the other topics, finance, user fees and service levels. It was very intentional for the BoCC to take a position on governance which they did last week. The intent with that action was to indicate their position that should the City of Spokane join with police dispatch they would receive an additional seat on the SREC Board to be held by the Spokane Police Chief. That is the position of the BoCC, it may not be what the City wanted, but it has been answered, so we can move on to the other topics. At the end of the last transition meeting the agreement was to use the next meeting to discuss service levels and potential user fee impacts. It was agreed by both sides, for the City to bring to the next meeting what their service level requests are and current costs they are incurring so that a base line can be created and can begin to create a cost allocation for what they are requesting. Scott believes they were on a path moving forward, yes, the first couple meetings were around governance and now the last couple have been cancelled or postponed.

Cody thanked Scott for that context and addressed Frank's comment on intent, whether transition or negotiation and if we don't agree is that an offramp. Cody added that we also need to know the intent of mediation. The half-day meetings with an agenda and possible facilitator from the State 911 Office is different than an established mediator with potential arbitration or something along those lines. Cody would like to find what we agree on, what we don't agree on, but at the end of the day the City would make their decision to join or not, and we would be good partners either way. Maggie doesn't think it is relevant whether we use transition or negotiation and referenced the Mayor's original correspondence with the ADCOMM report to the SREC Board that stated, we would like to move forward with the regional PSAP for both the City's public safety agencies if we can satisfactorily address the critical recommendations outlined in the report and highlighted below. Maggie added the intent is to satisfactorily address the items in the report which was also reiterated in the most recent letter. Maggie doesn't believe facilitation and mediation were offered with the intent of it ultimately ending in arbitration. Maggie continued it is ultimately just an independent third party to help us identify our shared interests and relevant solutions. Part of the challenge is we have some well-defined positions and those are complicating our ability to address the issues that are outlined. Frank again cautioned against opening that negotiation door. These words do mean something. Howard Johnson explained that his seat on the Board represents the

IEFCA and they keep asking why we are still doing this, why are we still having these conversations. We offered the City a product, they said yes, we want to join but we want to fundamentally change operations in order to join. Howard and the body he represents do not support the use of arbitration and this is another tactic to kick the can down the road. Mike Kittilstved asked if we were getting ahead of ourselves since there hasn't been a transition meeting since the BoCC made its decision. Lori clarified that this last letter from the Mayor came after the BoCC made their decision on governance and the letter still included governance as a topic, which makes Lori believe the City thinks there is still some discussion. Maggie added the letter is suggesting that yes, the BoCC took action to memorialize the recommendation in terms of governance but that an outside facilitator could help better articulate the concerns around equitable and proportional representation and help identify other arrangements or modifications to address those concerns that may be outside the formal structure. Scott added a letter memorializing the actions of the BoCC was sent to the City, City Council and SREC. Frank reiterated if governance has been addressed, then why is it still included in the Mayor's letter. Scott added that the formal action to change the governance goes through the Charter process which has not been done. That would be premature as the City has not made its decision yet. What the BoCC did do in their resolution is, should the City decide to join, the BoCC would amend the Charter to add the Police Chief.

Gayne Sears stated that what she is hearing is that there is willingness to continue to talk about the topics that haven't been decided and possibly using facilitation to help with that. Lori stated she believes that is the question before the Board, what is the intent. Cody summarized the SREC Board is willing to continue ongoing discussions with the City related to finances and service levels, including a formal agenda and potentially with a facilitator, but have reservations on mediation and negotiation. The SREC Board maintains it is a transitional meeting to inform the City's decision making and not committing to mediation. Jeff counseled the Board to make sure the Board's message is clear as to what the Board's belief and intent are so there is no miscommunication as to what the SREC Board wants to do with the meetings going forward. Cody reiterated his position is to understand the Board's intent. Howard believes the letter says something different, and there is not a separation between facilitating and mediating and that the facilitation is the mediation, and he cannot support that. Cody believes a formal response is needed to clarify what is in SREC's purview and what is not, and what SREC is willing to do. Mike stated we need to clarify that now so that we don't bind ourselves to mediation. Jeff explained that if it got to mediation or facilitation that would need to be worked through as far as who would mediate, who pays for it, timeline, etc., but it sounds like the Board does not want to go down that path. Lori stressed that the timeline is very important to her and reiterated that there are large projects in the works that are at critical decisions points, for the new facility if the City is joining that changes the price tag for everyone, telling the architect and contractor it could be one thing or another doesn't work. Additionally, the work being done on the CAD project is including SPD, but if they are not going to join, they have not contributed to the system and will not be a part of that system unless they pay into it. These things are hindering SREC operations. Lori reiterated, we originally asked for a decision prior to summer, the City asked for three months we gave them three months, now we are in these transition meetings, which has been another three months and now asking for additional three half-day meetings, where does this end, the concern is that there are a couple items where we seem to be at an impasse and even in choosing a facilitator, can we work through that. Frank read from the Mayor's letter; while my team appreciates the significant effort required to gather high-level regional officials, the meetings have lacked structure and skilled facilitation. As a result, we have struggled to meaningful grapple with, much less resolve remaining areas of misalignment. Frank interprets that as they did not get what they wanted so now they want to negotiate a third party to come and

attack it from that aspect. Frank is 100% against mediation, a facilitator, all of it. We have offered them a product and that's it. Frank added he has no issues discussing financial structure or service levels, we should be able to have those discussions, and everyone have input on their needs, but there needs to be a hard timeline. Mike stressed the importance of memorializing the items Lori mentioned that are adding stressors to staff, operations and critical decisions; this has been going on for a very long time. Bringing in a third-party facilitator who isn't a subject matter expert, doesn't know the background, would only take additional time to try and educate them. Mike believes there are smart capable people on both sides of the transition team that we should be able to figure this out, whether it is going to work or not. Brad Richmond reminded the group that we are stronger together and some great examples are the Oregon and Grey fires and that collaborative work. At the end of the day the mission of this Board is to provide service to the people we serve and the first responders who serve alongside us and we are losing sight of that in all this, and we need to move on. What are the service levels we can provide to meet the needs of the City of Spokane and what those membership fees look like and move on together as that is the best option in service to our citizens; we are a service agency. Gayne asked the question, what if we took the City of Spokane out of the equation and what would be the response if any other agency asked to join SREC: Yes, we would talk about what the service level looks like and the financial piece. The Board agreed that that already happens with member agencies and that is the responsibility of the Board. Gayne feels comfortable going down the path of continued discussions on service levels and finances.

Cody summarized the intent of the Board is that there is no desire from the Board to go down the facilitator or mediator path, but there is a desire, as with any new agency, to continue collaborative talks around service levels and finances with a formal agenda and timelines to address any ongoing challenges, planning and decision making. There are plenty of smart people, skilled facilitators in the room that can make this happen. Brad agreed with Cody that there are plenty of subject matter experts in the room, practitioners that do these jobs every day and lead these organizations in service, these are our facilitators. Cody added that he is clear on the intent of this Board and the next transition meeting is on Monday. Scott explained that he did respond to the Mayor's letter yesterday, stating that the transition team meeting is scheduled for Monday and would be best to bring the letter to that group as the SREC Board and the BoCC both have their members present. Scott added getting clarity from this group is helpful. Scott continued that we need to be honest on what we think we can and cannot do successfully.

c. CAD Update

Brandon Childs stated there was a major upgrade. Hexagon uses an annual release, there will be one next fall, and will also receive smaller quarter releases. In the beginning of the year work will be done with the Fire districts on recommendations and run cards, go over what is in current CAD versus new CAD and ensure it is built out appropriately. Those invites will go out January/February. The Law mobile build is coming up in the next few months and would like at least one person from each agency to participate so please get those recommendations to Dusty Patrick or Brandon. John Collins and Bradley Dilg are doing ride-alongs to get a sense of how current mobile is used. Go live is still expected for October 2025.

6. Staff Reports

a. Operations

Kim Arredondo explained they are looking at changing the format of the operations report, and streamlining it, as most of the data is staying consistent and include more operational goals, ACE accreditation, etc. Still seeing a decline in 911 and crime check

calls, hold times are improving, crime check reports are substantially up, and online reports up as well. These trends show that the public education is working, and crime check calls are becoming reports. Kim explained the next slide will most likely go away which is the top fifteen officer-initiated calls and overall calls, as these do not really change, and all this data will be available to agencies on their dashboards. There was an article in PSC magazine highlighting the great work of SREC's team that worked to improve our alerts interface and launch our interactive evacuation map last year. Scott clarified that just because it is an officer-initiated call, there is still interaction and work on the dispatch side. Kim continued that EMD statistics have stayed consistent. Surveys continue to go out with all crime check and online reports and the biggest question continues to be what the citizen does with their digital evidence. SREC will be pushing out next steps, who to contact and where to send their digital evidence. SREC will be contacting its law enforcement partners to get a brief summary on how long that process takes. The next academy is November 25th and then again in January. For cross training one trainee in law will be signing off in the next few weeks and will bring a new trainee on in December and Fire will have a new trainee in January. Currently sitting at a 6% vacancy rate. Lori reminded the Board that SREC is currently working towards EMD accreditation, the statistics and data are there, but there is a lot to the application process and will hopefully have everything by the end of the year.

b. Technical

Dusty Patrick stated radio site maintenance is wrapping up in preparation for winter. The radio shop is working on getting code plug changes for Fire and the Law radios are all getting the Whiskey Zone. There is a task order from the IEFCA (Inland Empire Fire Chiefs Association) for comprehensive radio system training and on the radios themselves. The radio subcommittee recommended including law groups as well, so Dusty brought it to the LCAB (Law Communications Advisory Board) group for volunteers to help produce content. The IT group installed some new switches at the CCB (Combined Communications Center) and the BUC (Backup Center) to provide more redundancy in anticipation of the new CAD system coming online. The group has been out to the new facility and confirming there are geo diverse connections to the State network and a multitude of internet service providers to provide redundancy.

c. Finance

Jenni Folden stated the audit is going well and getting close to wrapping up. The team has asked for the final purchase orders for 2024 be sent to them as the year begins to wrap up. Jenni explained they are working on getting 2025 more robust and informative for department heads.

d. Human Resources

Jeff Tower stated a new academy of three will begin on November 25th and background work has already started for the academy in January. Jeff thanked Megan Schneider for all her hard work on open enrollment, with the new system she helped implement, about 90% of it was able to be completed online. Cody thanked Megan as well.

e. Administration

Lori Markham stated she was able to present to the BoCC on November 5th and give them a state of the department report as well as brief them on the 2025 budget. There was good discussion, and they asked a lot of great questions and it was a great opportunity to share the great work SREC is doing and has done over the last five year.

7. Executive Session to Discuss Union Qualifications

As allowed by RCW 42.30.110(1)(g)

It is not anticipated action will be taken.

Cody Rohrbach closed the meeting at 9:20 a.m. and estimated the Board will open the meeting in five minutes.

The meeting moved to open session at 9:26 a.m., no action was taken.

8. Open/Public Comment

Brad Richmond thanked everyone for their service and wished them a Happy Thanksgiving.

9. Adjourn

Adjourned at 9:26 a.m.

The next Regular Governing Board meeting is scheduled for, December 19, 2024, at 8:00 a.m.



Board Member
Governing Board



Board Member
Governing Board