

SALT LAKE VALLEY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
February 17, 2021 Meeting Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Dan Petersen – UFA, Chairman
Mr. Korban Lee – West Jordan, Vice-Chairman
Mr. David Dobbins – Draper
Mr. Doug Hill - Murray
Mr. Gary Whatcott – South Jordan
Ms. Gina Chamness – Holladay
Mr. Kyle Kershaw – South Salt Lake
Mr. David Brickey - Riverton
Ms. Wendy Thomas - Herriman
Mr. Mark Reid – Bluffdale
Ms. Lisa Hartman - SLCo
Mr. Tim Tingey – Cottonwood Heights
Mr. Scott Harrington - Taylorsville
Mr. Jake Petersen – UPD
Mr. John Evans – West Valley City

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Kane Loader – Midvale
Mr. Mike Morey – Alta

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mr. Scott Ruf – Director, VECC
Ms. Andrea Partridge - VECC
Mr. Clint Jensen – VECC
Mr. John Eining – Draper
Mr. Warren James - Bluffdale
Mr. Scott Young – VECC Counsel
Mr. Terry Addison – South Salt Lake
Mr. Troy Carr – Herriman
Mr. Derek Maxfield – West Jordan
Mr. Dustin Dern – UFA
Mr. Don Hutson – Riverton
Ms. Colleen Jacobs – West Valley City
Mr. Ryan Shosted – Riverton
Mr. Bruce Kartchner – Bluffdale
Mr. Chad Pascua – Murray
Ms. Lisa Dudley – UDA
Ms. Rosie Rivera – UPD
Mr. Riley Pilgrim - UFA

In view of the COVID-19 Pandemic, this meeting will be held at virtually via ZOOM, as authorized by the Governor's Executive Order dated March 18, 2020 and affirmed November 8, 2020.

Mr. Dan Petersen called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments received for this meeting.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 20, 2021 MEETING MINUTES**Motion –**

. . . by Mr. Tim Tingey, to approve the minutes of the December 2020 Trustees meeting; the motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION OF TENTATIVE FY2022 BUDGET

Clint Jensen displayed the tentative budget and mentioned that the budget was also sent out to the members. There was an executive summary there that went through some of the highlights of what we are dealing with for our FY2022 budget. On the revenue side, in total, we are requesting a 2.5% increase. The law assessment for the FY2021 budget of \$6.6 million includes the SLCO Animal Control Amount. In essence, \$200k plus was double counted as potential revenue in the current year budget. In addition, the interest income will probably come in more around \$40k for next year; our fund balances are lower than they have traditionally been, and interest rates are not doing well. We are lowering this by about \$60k. The misc. revenue in the current year budget of \$300k is typically GRAMA requests and other sundry items that we collect, and we are budgeting this at \$30k for FY2022. The final big-ticket item is \$300k worth of one-time cash reserves was anticipated for FY2021 and we are not budgeting any use of cash reserves in FY2022. On the expense side, wages in total are proposed to go up 5.1%, the bulk of that being in full time wages. Our operations staff are part of a step system which provides them to have a step up as they gain more experience. We anticipate that most of the employees eligible for this step will get it, which will cost \$260k. Additionally, there is a little bit of money in there, considering a 1% merit for those not part of the step system, such as Admin and IT. The other big item is OPEB of \$200k. The Center currently has a post-employment benefit liability of about \$875k; we have never budgeted anything in the past to either fund these potential retirees, which we have 5-6 employees who could retire this year, and this is in anticipation of anyone who might decide to retire. Some of these employees have high balances when it comes to their leave categories, and there would be a pay-out. This amount is set aside for that. If it's not spent, what we hope to do as part of the finance committee is come back and talk about what we can do with fund balances and maybe set aside money to satisfy that liability so it's not a line item we continually have to budget for. Kyle Kershaw clarified that the OPEB is basically VECC funding anticipated leave for employees that will retire sometime during the year. Clint said yes and that there is no other benefit paid out such as post retirement medical insurance or retire benefits. Korban Lee asked if there were any other outstanding liabilities, other than vacation leave, accrued to employees that the Board should be aware of, like a severance agreement. Clint is only carrying on the books the accrued vacation leave, and unless Scott has an agreement that would include severance, he is not aware of any employees that would have a severance package. Scott Ruf commented that they went through during this past budget cycle to reimburse for some old VECC compensatory time, which we no longer offer, and we cleared the books of this liability and then brought all the vacation in line with what the existing policy is for accruals. We hope to mitigate those liabilities moving forward. Clint reviewed the payroll benefits; on the ICMA, Medicare and URS, these budgets are going up 16-17%. In the previous years budget, the calculation for Medicare retirement benefits was based just on full time wages and did not include other pay categories such as overtime or any incentive which ICMA, Medicare and URS, we pay on those benefits. This is why the numbers are coming in higher is to make up for the short fall in not having those numbers appropriately budgeted for FY2021. He is projecting that we will come in in total with all personnel expenses to be within budget for this fiscal year, in part due to the fact that we have not been fully staffed for the bulk of the year. Because of that, we are saving a bit of money for the current fiscal year. FY2022 is an effort to bring everything into line so that we are budgeting exactly what we need to pay for those benefits. In addition to this, the group health insurance is increasing even though we had no increase to our benefits for FY2021. The same problem here existed in budgeting where now we've gone through and determined exactly what each employee has selected in benefits. The previous budget was more of a one size fits all which left us short because we didn't anticipate as many people having the family plan. That premium is shared 85% VECC and 15% employee. On a few line items under Administration, overall, the costs go down about \$500k. We went through every line item to make sure that things that were in there were necessary and those that didn't lend itself to supporting the overall goals of the Center were trimmed out. We also had some one-time money with money granted to us from the State/UCA that helped pay for a lot of equipment. Some of the equipment line items have been reduced substantially because this year we were able to really get our technology in good order. A few things to be aware of; the software maintenance line item is going up over \$400k primarily due to Versaterm. The Spillman contract will go away but the Versaterm contract is being

picked up and our net cost to the Center is about \$735k. We will save maybe \$250k of that on the Spillman side. Also, on the software, the accounting software here is not great, it doesn't fit us and it's very cumbersome. The system is very old, and the proposal is \$30k in the first year, which would pay to implement a system. A hosted system would run approximately \$15k here to host it and we currently pay about \$8k for software maintenance on our current system. On the Versaterm costs, Doug Hill asked if the money in the budget covered all the Versaterm costs or if there would be additional costs assessed out to the member agencies in addition to that. He also asked if the \$1.2 million was divided based on member agency fees. Scott explained that the Center covers the Center and all the CAD MDT-supported maintenance as well as the scheduled upgrades. The piece that is billed separate from the assessment is the part for the RMS and MRE system for the law enforcement agencies. This is broken out by agency size and each agency has agreed and is required to pay their actual costs related to the RMS portion of the Veraterm system. On the system upgrades and support, it is currently at a 65%/35% split with SLC911. Clint mentioned the telephone expenses which shows a significant reduction there. This is in anticipation of the new phone system being installed and once in, there will be a potential \$60k per month savings. We have only budgeted ½ year of that telephone expense, about \$360k and we hope that the upgrade will happen. Clint is hoping he won't have to come back in November with the upgrade not done and have to ask for more money for this. Finally, there are bond principal and interest that VECC pays, debt service which goes through 2025 and a few leases. The \$75k net contribution to fund balance is an effort to get us in line with our debt service requirements, a 1.25 requirement of debt revenue compared to our debt service and by having the \$75k built in, it helps us get to this ratio required. The debt service will end fiscal 2025. Chief Petersen explained that the intent was to introduce this, it's not ready for an adoption as much as it is to introduce and give everyone time to think more and give everyone an idea of what to put in their line items for their own budgets. This gets Scott to all the requirements he believes the state requires for us to meet targets and run at risk of burning the 911 funds. In addition, this corrects a lot of challenges this year that once corrected, it's moving forward in more of a maintenance and managing growth mode as opposed to a corrective mode. Clint has been great in digging in and finding the problems and getting the bigger items. Chief Petersen asked if there was any more discussion or direction and then the intent moving to the next agenda item would be to talk about how that revenue stream from fire and law gets broken apart. Doug Hill, in reviewing the executive summary, he was surprised that there were no new personnel being added as Scott had mentioned several times in the past that he felt there was a need for additional personnel. He was curious if that thinking was changing or if it needs further discussion. Scott replied that back in the fall when the Board adopted the benchmark for our performance related to the audit, combined with our schedule changes, adding a cover shift, and looking at personnel in total, based on the memo drafted around his concerns with the assessment, that model between dispatchers and call takers allows Scott to meet the requirements and performance levels set forth by the board. VECC has always been hiring but there has never been an official personnel number. We have stabilized the attrition rate and Scott believes we can achieve the performance levels provided we maintain the flexibility in our staffing model for the agencies. He does not anticipate the need for additional people, and he believes the numbers he looked at in 2019, they were around 137 dispatchers/call takers. Our model is about 130 and he believes we are in a good position based on the changes made and how we are moving things forward. Korbin commented that he loved the budget because of the good budgeting principles and truing up revenue estimates to actual revenues and not counting revenues twice and he was proud of the work done in tightening up the budget. He did request to meet with Clint prior to the next meeting to go over some questions he has on the budget. The Board also discussed scheduling a public hearing for the March meeting. Clint mentioned that the idea was a draft budget today, a tentative budget in March to consider for adoption, and possibly having the public hearing in April or May, and this could also be the ongoing budget calendar.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

Korban Lee mentioned at the last Trustees meeting, he reported back on the work of the Finance Committee with the recommendation that we change the assessment formula, which divides up the costs among all the member agencies. They proposed a console distribution for the split between law and fire and that fire then be distributed based on calls for service and that law be distributed based on console costs and if there were shared console costs among agencies, they discussed different ways to split the cost. Since that time, there have been questions and issues raised. Scott sent out an email and memo on February 3rd spelling out his concerns with the console model as it may feel like it handcuffs him in terms of his operational flexibility he needs in the center. If he is staffing to the console instead of staffing to the needs of the overall center, it could create challenges. As Trustees, there were issues and concerns about the potential challenges with the

assessments with the console model. The Finance Committee met a week ago and reconsidered these issues and possible models for distribution of costs and discontinued consideration to use calls for service as the method by which we divide up and calculate costs. Scott has shared ways that he intends to improve the counting and data collection, the methods by which we measure calls for service going forward, specifically by counting everything. Every self-initiated call, dispatch called, logged and activity will all be thrown into the CAD and will be counted. Also, as we all move towards a common CAD, any differences between the CAD systems and the way they count will be ironed out moving forward. With this in mind, as a Committee, they recommended moving toward either calls for service model or a hybrid model where calls for service is 50% and the number of sworn personnel is 50%. Korban would like to recommend using the hybrid model for dividing up law costs. If there is a question about the reliability of the calls for service data, or the way calls are being measured, the hybrid model is better because then, calls for service is only 50% of the determining factor of one agencies bill. The other 50% is based upon the number of sworn personnel that law enforcement agency has. This is also a fair indicator and approximate estimate of the size and activity of an agency; it helps to use this as a factor on the model, to offset the concerns about any irregularities in the way calls for service are counted. Scott has been cleaning up and improving the calls for service data going forward so that in the future if we want to change and go to a straight calls for service model, it would be great when there is solid data behind it. The hybrid model is better because it mutes the concerns about irregularities in the calls for service data and balances it against the simple number of sworn officers a law enforcement agency has. We would take the VECC budget, apply the revenue for the 911 fees, the remaining balance gets divided up by the total number of consoles in the center. If 4 of 18 consoles are fire and 14 out of 18 are law enforcement, fire would pay 22% of the total costs based on calls for service and law would pay for 77% of the total costs, divided it 50% based on number of sworn personnel and 50% based on calls for service. Korban sent a memo out earlier today which goes into a lot more detail and includes 2 earlier memos from Dir. Ruf and the concerns he had with the console model and his plans for definitions and parameters around defining calls for service. The Committee did not apply the assessment formula to Clint's proposed budget because they wanted the budget to be considered independently of the assessment model. Many of the Trustees commented that they liked the hybrid model, and they were appreciative of the Finance Committee and their hard work.

CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTING MEMBER FEE

Motion –

. . . By Chief Dan Petersen, that the first break between law and fire is the console model; the motion was seconded by Mr. Kyle Kershaw; the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Motion –

. . . By Mr. Gary Whatcott, to accept the hybrid model of 50% based on call for service and 50% based on the number of sworn officers for an agency for the law enforcement assessments; the motion was seconded by Mr. Korban Lee; the motion carried with 11 yea, 1 nay and 2 abstain votes.

Motion –

. . . By Mr. Korban Lee, to use calls for service as the measure to divide costs among fire and EMS agencies; the motion was seconded by Mr. John Evans; the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Chief Petersen asked Clint and Scott to send out what each agency cost would be; Clint will get it put together and send it to everyone, integrating it into the budget document.

BOARD OF OPERATIONS BRIEFING

Chief Carr reported that on February 11th, they met as a joint Operations Board and then Police did a break-out session afterward. They welcomed Chief Brady Cotter from Taylorsville, the new Police Chief. For Police, Chief Hoyal from UPD gave them an update on 10-200 with alpha points, which is basically the ability to shut down the County if a major event happens. They discussed coding channels during major events and that they won't automatically be un-patched; it will require a notification before that happens. They talked about standardizing practices for abandoned vehicles on private property and these practices should be established across the users at VECC. 2-unit responses on calls for personnel when they aren't available and how procedurally they want

dispatch to handle that was discussed. Chief Maxfield reported on the Fire portion of the meeting. Chief Ascarte reported that from the Fire Users, they are still working on the CAD project and some updates to include the switch to the APCO Fire EMD. The goal date for implementation for this is March 1st. They discussed BC response on the interstates as it relates to the closest unit vs agency BC, and it doesn't apply to everyone in the valley but there was discussion on how this would take place. There were issues with silent dispatching and the MDT's and a reminder to have everyone make sure they are still doing both going enroute on the radio as well as on the MDT's. They also talked about the users doing an audit of the fire response channels in the south end of the valley. Those response channels are divided up geographically, and they want to insure there is a fairly even use of those, or if they need to reevaluate who is assigned to which channel. Chief Carr reported that they also discussed radio resources and allocations as well as the realignment with Draper, Herriman, Riverton, and Cottonwood Heights in Midvale. One thing that became very interesting was that South Jordan got their UCA talk time back and they recognized a 70% reduction with the efficiencies we are finding out here with silent dispatching. They are seeing a great reduction in time that they need the air. They also talked about the State fleet map being approved for option B.

REVIEW MONTHLY PERFORMANCE & PROGRESS REPORT

Scott Ruf displayed the report for January 2021, and we were able to achieve what was set forth by the Trustees, 85% of the 911 calls answered in 15 seconds or less or 90% of 911 calls answered in 20 second or less by July 2021. We were at 88.4% and 90.19%. In 6 months, there has been a 22% improvement in efficiencies. What this tells Scott is, without our new phone system, with the right staffing, the changes to the schedule and people being here, we are on the path to meet those standards. Now we must sustain them. We are almost at the NENA standard for 15 seconds and just shy of them for 20 seconds. He commended the staff here and its great news and very positive, but it will still be a roller coaster as many things drive these numbers. He believes we have a good foundation. One thing we did talk about when Sen. Harper was here was the high number of abandoned 911 calls, which are calls that hit the 911 center and people either hang up and call back in or just hang up. As our performance improves our attrition rates go down comparatively. There is no standard for abandoned rate, but Scott picked 5% based on studies in the private sector, and we are at about the State average around 11%. Scott is sensitive to the concerns and we are committed to making those improvements. Korban Lee shared his appreciation and Chief Petersen felt like the work done would make a difference in all the communities directly daily. Senator Harper will be pleased, and he will be supportive of the services that we are providing.

DIRECTORS REPORT

Scott Ruf commented that the CAD project is on track. The Murray Police department is in their final stages and may go live a bit early; they are finishing up training on their agency side and once that's done, we will be able to transition them over and the roll into West Jordan, followed by SSL and West Valley. In the mix of this, there was a request by Taylorsville to make it possible for them to move to Versaterm as a new agency on July 1st. Scott was told that it is possible with the team from Versaterm and the local team here as most of the precinct will be retained as Taylorsville officers so there's not a big learning curve on training. Scott did say that it cannot impede the rollout and continued transition of the already existing agencies working towards that transition. Overall, things are going well and moving along. We are testing the interface for the new APCO EMD, working with SLC, and making sure the workflow is right and gives us the right responses that are necessary. We're waiting on a change order on the cad-to-cad aggregator which would allow DPS and other agencies to tie into the data exchange hub and be able to push cad requests and information back and forth between VECC and those agencies, eliminating the 911 transfers. With the performance report, VECC is in a good place with employee and staffing; we have 10 more employees starting on Monday, which will, for the first time in many years, have us at 100% staffing. The CAD project continues, and we'll roll right into the new budget year and the new staffing model and continue to make progress. Chief Carr touched a bit on the radio resources and things around the state, UCA did accept the fleet map proposal from Director Edumuds after input and consideration from around the state. Chief Carr also expressed some local concerns about programing the subscriber equipment and mitigating some of the perceived challenges going to the model UCA wants to go to. Scott engaged UCA to ask to provide him with what they have a vision for the state and allow us here at VECC to work with the agencies here on what that might look like, though it's a few years down the road. If we can work the model out here, they'll have a template for the rest of the state, and it gives us a lot of control and drive on how we will make these communications plans on the new radio system working in the programing. The new 911 phone equipment is a UCA-sponsored project; it's been delayed several times and is

tied to the issue in the budget that Clint discussed and potential savings of about \$60k per month. The delay issue isn't with UCA but with CenturyLink and the carriers getting circuits for the 911 circuits. We would like to get the phone system done sooner rather than later. None of us want to do a lift on a major new system with the 911 phone system during the summer as there is too much of a liability. We have project calls with them every other week to get updates and Scott will keep this Board updated. VECC is moving to APCO EMD and we have been working closely with SLC but will be going live on March 1st. The training here is done, and our employees are certified.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR ADMIN/FINANCE REPORT

Clint Jensen displayed revenue and said that some of the things discussed in the budget are starting to show themselves here in the monthly report, particularly the law enforcement agencies for example. We billed everyone, however, what we budgeted versus what we billed is what we'll collect, which shows the \$200k shortcoming. On the personnel side, some of the percentages have drifted higher and overall, Clint believes we will be okay and come in alright on budget. The other expense line items are as we would expect as many of our expenses are paid in the early part of the fiscal year with software maintenance and insurance. He reviewed the cash balances and as of the end of January, we have a little over \$600k in checking and \$1.6 million in savings, burning through a bit of that since then. He displayed the check registered and there are a few reconciliation adjustments showing up that were causing some grief as we were reconciling the accounts.

CLOSED SESSION

There was a closed session issue to discuss. Chief Petersen requested just Trustee members be in attendance of this session.

Motion–

. . . By Mr. Gary Whatcott, to move into a closed session to discuss potential and/or ongoing litigation; the motion was seconded by Mr. Doug Hill; the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

The meeting went into closed session at 3:32 p.m.

Motion –

. . . by Mr. Jake Petersen, to re-open the public meeting; the motion was seconded by Mr. Tim Tingey; the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

The public meeting re-opened at 4:01 p.m.

There was nothing else to discuss at the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.