

SALT LAKE VALLEY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

July 21, 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
Mr. Kyle Kershaw – South Salt Lake
Mr. David Brickey - Riverton
Mr. Nathan Cherpeski - 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:

Ms. Gina Chamness - Holladay
Mr. Mike Morey – Alta
Open – Midvale

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mr. Scott Ruf – Director, VECC
Ms. Beth Todd - VECC
Mr. Clint Jensen – VECC
Mr. Robbie Russo – Cottonwood Heights
Mr. Scott Young – VECC Legal Counsel
Mr. Terry Addison – South Salt Lake
Mr. Troy Carr – Herriman
Mr. Derek Maxfield – West Jordan
Ms. Andrea Partridge – VECC
Ms. Nicole Lopez – VECC
Ms. Mary Bain – VECC
Ms. Trisha Morton – VECC
Mr. Jason Knight – South Jordan
Mr. Dave Edmunds – UCA Director

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 2:15 p.m.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 19, 2021 BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING MINUTES

Motion –

. . . by Mr. Doug Hill, to approve the minutes of the June 19,2021 Trustees meeting, the motion was seconded by Mr. Gary Whatcott; the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments received for this meeting.

VECC PERFORMANCE & PROGRESS REPORT

Scott went over the monthly performance and progress report; we took a step back in June by around 5% points in performance, however, we are really struggling with the integrity and functionality of the old phone system and the 2 CAD systems. There is a light at the end with the CAD project coming to an end later this year and in a few weeks, the new phone system will be in place, which will stabilize us and give us good data and feedback. Chief Petersen asked Scott if he received any feedback on the report, but Scott hasn't released it yet. He was waiting for approval from the Board, which was received, and he will forward it after this meeting.

New Motorola VESTA NG911 Phone System

After numerous delays that were 3rd party, not related to VECC or UCA, we have a go-live for region 1 next week. Region 1 includes SLVECC, SLC911, Weber911, and Bountiful. We also house the old legacy equipment between us and Weber, which is why we were chosen to go first. The new go-live for SLVECC is the week of August 9th, with go-live on Wednesday, August 11th. SLC will follow on the 16th with go-live on the 18th, and then Bountiful and Weber. The design of the new phone system, the reconfiguration the call flow, will allow us to focus on 911's and help address call answer times and we'll get good, stable data moving forward. Our 911 system now has 911 calls in the queue that do not drop, and 911 Call Takers ready to take these calls and cannot answer them. They are getting co-mingled with the non-emergency numbers and when they drop in, we don't know if it's an emergency or non-emergency call.

UCA VECC CONSULTING PROJECT UPDATE

Scott reminded the Board that last summer and fall, as a result of the state audit, one of the discussions as we presented our concerns and issues with the various projects, UCA at their Board level offered as part of their mission to provide resources to allow an independent 3rd party to come into VECC and assist us in achieving some of these standards. It was an offering to see where they could provide assistance and validate some of the changes made and being made. The RFP was awarded to Federal Engineering a month ago. Director Edmunds has been invited to this meeting to provide his perspective of the intent behind the audit and what they are hoping to achieve and assist us. Director Edmunds explained some of the history on why UCA is involved in this. Chairman Davenport, a former DPS Commissioner, and the UCA Board Chairman, brought this issue up to their Board back in September of 2020, specifically petitioning the Board and asked them their thoughts of going out and, and their expense, getting an outside consultant firm to come to VECC and take a look at the operations. The UCA Act says that UCA should provide administrative and financial support for state-wide 911 emergency services. It also instructs them that they have the obligation to identify and address deficiencies relating to PSAP's staffing and training, etc. Dave mentioned the new NG911 phone system and commented that once it's up and running, UCA believes it will be helpful to not only VECC but to other operations around the state. Any NG911 ESInet is only as good as the providers that actually provide information to that system. The most recent legislative audit that VECC was subject to indicated that there were some shortcomings when talking about the national 911 call answering statistics. The concept of getting an outside consulting firm to come in and look at the operations here, UCA sees it as a good thing, and they hope the Board sees it that way as well. Scott Ruf has been part of the RFP process and he sat on the selection committee as well and he's been part of this whole process. Once Federal Engineering comes in and provide the written analysis, UCA will share it with this Board. UCA feels this will provide this Board with some very good information on VECC and they hope the Board sees this as something positive. Jake Petersen asked what the discussion may have been surrounding the recommendation to have an audit. Dave Edmunds mentioned that when UCA saw what VECC was going through, there was a lot of sympathy from the Board members, as they have been subject to audits themselves. They thought it was consistent with their mission to provide an audit to VECC like this. He did not feel there was anything adversarial in it and that it was very much trying to provide assistance in helping VECC with operational needs. UCA does provide a lot of things to VECC. The NG911 ESInet is a big deal and it's something UCA provides. Korban Lee asked if this audit would primarily look at operations at VECC, the technological systems, or a combination of both and how much is the audit expected to cost. Dave commented that it would be a six-figure cost for them. And principally, it's going to be Operational; under the general requirements, they asked the respondents to the RFP that the consultant must have extensive knowledge, experience and understanding of PSAP operations, standards, 911-call counting reports, ECAT's, etc. It also requires knowledge of 911 phone systems, radio consoles, CAD's, the area that VECC dispatches as well as the agencies VECC dispatches for and understands the entirety of VECC's operations. The consulting group is scheduled to come out the first week or two of August and sit down with Scott and other stakeholders dealing with VECC. They will also be in discussions with the Board members.

Chief Petersen shared that there is one ask he would have had from the UCA Board, and that would have been to have reached out to us and asked for us to be able to share our thoughts about this process before it was started. He would have like to make sure there could have been things that the Board would have liked to have seen included in that RFP as a Board that may or may not be included or focused on. It's been described as both an audit but also a consultant. He appreciated the inclusion of Scott in the RFP and selection piece, but he would have loved an inclusion of the Board. Dave appreciated this information and felt that prior to the RFP being released, they did talk with Scott, and believed that it was the consent they were looking for. He understands Chief Petersen's perspective as the Chairman of the Board, that coming to him directly may have been a better way to do that. In the midst of doing everything they were doing, he felt Scott's consent was sufficient. It's anticipated that after the consultant's analysis, they will promulgate a report with recommendations, which can be taken and executed or not. UCA sees this as very positive and an opportunity for VECC to have UCA pay for an outside firm to come in and look at things. VECC is responsible for a quarter or more of all the 911 calls made in the State of Utah and UCA has a direct vested interest in seeing VECC be successful. Chief Petersen believes VECC will be very open to the feedback. He would like to schedule in the next Board meeting a presentation of what UCA is asking from the consultants and a high-level overview of the expectations of the outcome for VECC. Scott will work with Director Edmunds to coordinate next months meeting. He also mentioned that he spoke with the Project Manager of Federal Engineering and because of the challenges VECC is having today, they are trying to get in within the next week or two and see the operation pre-new phone system. Korban Lee asked how long this audit consultation would last. Dave mentioned it would start in the next week or so and they have been given a deadline of their report by November 15th.

FOLLOW-UP FROM MEETING WITH SENATE PRESIDENT & HOUSE SPEAKER

Chief Petersen said the focus of this meeting was to make sure they knew that the Trustees were engaged and cared about these declining numbers and the status of VECC's performance. They shared the progress we've had between the leadership team, the stabilization of the finances and the commitment everyone has made to the Center financially. They discussed the success of finally finding a common CAD, the integration of the Sheriff and UPD in the Center, the new dispatch protocols and getting the Center fully staffed. They also talked about core issues related to 911 calls. He felt good about their response to it; they want dates and times and Chief Petersen shared key parts about the significant improvements occurring with the phone system, which was scheduled for July 12th, and now scheduled for mid-August, but that we should see a difference within a month of that. They were responsive and respectful in that process. Jake Petersen and Korban Lee also attended this meeting and Korban added that he felt they were generally and sincerely concerned about the performance of VECC and that the meeting was very positive. Jake also agreed with this and felt that their concerns align with everyone, and he walked away feeling supported.

CAD PROJECT UPDATE

Scott Ruf is reporting that on July 1st, Taylorsville was reborn and went live. At the end of June, we had a kickoff meeting for South Salt Lake and West Valley police. Both agencies are working in parallel towards their go-lives. South Salt Lake is slated to go live in September and West Valley at the end of this year. Next month, Scott will bring forward an MOU bringing the U of U into the county-wide common CAD project. We are on track and on budget. We are also still working on the CAD2CAD aggregator to deal with DPS, the TOC in SLCO, to receive and exchange information of calls. There has also been interest from Central Utah 911, Tooele, and others to be a part of this and the bigger project. This will be very important for us with Central Utah as part of the NextGen 911 phone system in a redistribution of workload, fail over and disaster recovery.

OPERATIONS BOARDS

Chief Maxfield reported on the Fire Operations meeting. They weren't initially going to meet but after discussions about standardization of responses, they felt it was important to meet and discuss. There was nothing to discuss on the technology and users, but they wanted to discuss standardizing the response levels as it pertained to mostly the initial assignment and how those units are paged out and arrive. There was confusion on how that took place and some of that will be brought up later in the agenda. Ultimately, it was decided to go back to standard first-alarm response, second, third and the working incident notifications and how they were before with the addition of an ambulance. Everyone is on the same page now and it will be sent back to users, so they are aware and know this is what was decided.

The Police Operations did not meet in July.

OPERATIONS BOARD ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES REVIEW OF EXISTING DOCUMENTS

In the packet, there is a Resolution from 2014 and details about the use of the Board of Operations and how they fit into the system. There have been a few minor changes, one of which is having a separate report with Police and Fire. With your support, Chief Petersen would like to work with Korban Lee and the Chairs of both Police and Fire, and Scott, and go over these existing documents to see if anything needs to be modified and brought back to this Board for discussion. He asked if anyone has anything they want changed, he asked them to send him an email. Chief Petersen will reach out and schedule a time to meet.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Scott Ruf covered a lot of his report earlier. VECC is still struggling with staffing and hiring, which is the next item on the agenda. A few months ago, we were at or near full staff and have since gone down about 20 people. We had 3 people start a few weeks ago and 3 additional scheduled to start on Monday. Just last week, we lost 2 full time and 1 part time employees. Scott provided a memo to the Police and Fire Chiefs' regarding Operations, and the Board was copied on it as well. It discusses call flow and workload on VECC and some of the changes we are requesting to be able to focus on our core mission of 911 and police/fire dispatching. We are still on track to implement new call flow with the new phone system mid-August. This is the first step in continuing to reevaluate the work that has made its way into VECC from the various agencies, whether it be call answering of non-emergency administrative lines, other work related to records and CJIS and things like that. Jake Petersen asked Scott if he could explain the abandoned 911 call rate and what percentage of workload that coming into the center. Scott explained that we average between 16 -20% of abandoned calls, which is between 3000-5000 calls per month out of our total incoming 911 calls. By agency policy, we are required to call every abandoned calls back to make sure there is no emergency. As part of the new phone system, there is automated abandoned call back which allows the system to manage those abandoned calls before they are presented to the Center. Korban Lee wanted to discuss the memo Scott sent out to the Police/Fire Chiefs about the way 911 calls will be prioritized. He felt this was in line with what the Board wanted as far as prioritizing the answering of the 911 calls and everything else would be pushed down or back to the member agencies. Korban asked if everyone was comfortable with Scott's direction and if he's good to go as it's about time to execute this. Lisa Hartman has one question in talking with her Animal Services Director, and that was on the animal services emergencies. There was concern with Animal Services being #3 on the options if it is a true emergency and the possibility of having it moved up. Scott can move this up and he said it's related to the non-emergency lines, the 7000 and 4000 lines. Traditionally, if it's an animal attack or bite, more often than not, people are dialing 911 and not the animal services line for the jurisdiction. In looking at all of the administrative calls that come in, a large percentage is just basic administrative questions, but he can move animal control emergencies as the first option. Tim Tingey mentioned that here have been conversations and communications on the concern with the phone tree and what that does as far as switching customer service from where we've been at and getting people connected and suggested maybe more conversations about this. Scott commented that the challenge is to work on performance and calls. Since most of the calls we receive typically can be handled at the agency level, is it better to have them select the appropriate agency to get the help they need or from a customer standpoint, do we deal with more upset and frustrated people as we do know of long hold times and sitting in a queue. Scott believes this is the balance when looking at customer service, whether it's a phone tree or a non-emergency administrative phone queue. He also checked with centers around the state and it's rare with PSAP's of this size to even take agency phone calls directly. There is still an option if they need dispatch but most of the time, it's issues the agencies can handle internally. If the police department is closed, we are having people call back on the next business day. Chief Petersen believes the Trustees can have further discussion about this direction, but he believes this has been their direction to Scott to find out a way to remove as much of the administration side and to focus on the 911 call taking and dispatching. This is Scott's attempt to be consistent with the Trustees direction and does this achieve for all or the majority of the Board the consensus of direction given to him. If this is not consistent with what we are telling Scott, this is the perfect time to put pause on it or give him different direction. Tim Tingey completely agrees that 911 needs to be the priority and he knows there is a balance. He wondered if the Operations Board has looked at the back end on the administrative side of things and provided any recommendations on that. Scott has brought these issues to every Operations Board meeting since the new phone system was going to be deployed, and he's had discussions of moving to a phone tree and focusing on 911's and the impacts that may or may not happen for the agencies. We are trying to mitigate the lack of customer service and move the work

floor around and we have been pretty consistent with where we were headed. Tim commented that the only issue is the challenges when citizens call to speak with an on-duty officer and there is no way to connect with the call but through the phone tree. But if the Operations Board is comfortable with it, that's a balance we have to face. Scott mentioned there is an option for dispatch and if a caller chooses that option, they will go into a non-emergency queue to be handled as we have personnel available to deal with them. There will be the capacity to assign people to deal with that queue. Troy Carr commented that Scott has brought these issues to the meetings, and it has been discussed. At the end of the day, it comes to exactly what Scott said which is to answer 911 calls and non-emergency calls needing police and fire. Chief Petersen also explained that there has been a lot of discussion over the last few months in Trustees about some agencies having to react if they've been dependent for VECC for this service, they may need to deal with and address some of the short falls that come when this is implemented, which may be the biggest challenge. Korban Lee said that the Trustees must decide how they are defining customer service as it relates to VECC. The definition for customer service as it relates to VECC will focus on the speed at which 911 calls are answered and the process by which emergent calls are dispatched. On some of the more non-emergent calls, customer service will take a step back from where it currently is. The trade off for that is that the emergent calls will get a better and quicker response.

EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

VECC is struggling with recruitment, and we are losing a lot of the newer people to the private sector for less stress and more money. Scott and Clint have worked together in reviewing what's happening in the marketplace and reviewing and mitigating concerns with recruitment and retention with existing employees. Scott provided a memo in the packet referring to a June 16th memo about recruitment and changes in the environment. He is asking to look at the compensation and benefits package. They reviewed the current pay scale and what our flexibility and ability to move within the existing budget is and really work hard to not get just bodies but the right people here. The memo requested consideration of a pay increase for all new hires as well as base increases to all Operations personnel, which would provide for any internal pay equity and compression concerns moving forward. Scott asked that considerations be done in a phase approach, but it is a global package. In the original memo, Clint Jensen pointed out some additional funding sources in the existing budget which we previously put out there. With updates on the new phone system and the confidence that we are deploying the new system in the next few weeks, we can immediately serve notice to terminate the old circuits, which will save between \$65k-\$68k per month. During the FY2022 budget discussion, we've already banked in 50% of those annual savings to the budget. Scott provided this morning a supplemental memo to look at this new plan, implement it in phases with the new entry level rates, as well as maybe looking at the employer provided health care after 10 years of service, and then be prepared to discuss this in FY2023. With existing funds in the existing budget and projected early savings to the phone system, the total funding sources are between \$584k and \$649k, program costs phase 1 with immediate implementation to the new hire, VECC provided health benefits in Jan 2022, hiring incentives and lateral dispatch programs, the cost of this is just over \$500k. There is capacity within the existing budget savings to begin this phase 1 program, should the Board be willing to consider moving forward with phase 1 immediately. The program costs were full-year cost projections. This would be pro-rated based on a monthly save or January 2022, last half of FY22 for health benefits and things like that. We would also propose to put in a very clear pay for performance model. For the TS and Administrative department, we would do a true market study to see where we are at. Scott believes the impacts are minimal if any for this fiscal year and moving forward, depending on how savings are allocated and the budget is managed, it would be within ranges. He feels he's presented a funding mechanism to at least begin the initial phases and work on recruitment and stabilizing our entry level personnel. Jake Petersen asked Scott to explain the insurance component and how he feels this will help. In looking at the cost of health insurance, it's a huge benefit for the employees at a minimal cost to the agencies. Scott is trying to get creative in what we are trying to offer. By them not paying premiums, they would immediately realize a small raise or a little additional take home pay, without us going into having to expedite or deal with some of these salary adjustments or compression issues moving forward. Scott has done research within other agencies to find out what they are offering. In an almost \$20 million-dollar budget, we recoup a few hundred thousand back in premiums. To turn around and give some of this as an incentive for people's dedication to the organization and their performance and time here, it's just another form of compensation. His concern is it won't work if phase 1 is implemented and people see significant raises and we don't do anything for existing employees. It might make it easier to recruit, but we'll lose those who have spent a lot of their career here. Tim Tingey asked about the hiring incentives and what that entails with that \$50k. Scott looked at what other agencies are offering, such as hiring and signing bonuses and he's just putting options and tools out there to look at. With a lateral

program, what would be incentives to get people with experience to relocate and come here to work. We have not sat down and drafted anything of what this would look like, but just looked out in the market to see what 911 Centers are doing around the state and country. Then we would tie it to length of time and things like that. Doug Hill asked what the new hire rate increase/adjustments is based on. The new hire recruitment is directly in line with the private sector. Weber and SLC911 have both given salary increases recently and Weber also transitioned to the Police/Fire Pension, which is not something we are in the position to do financially. We will run into this around the state is the trade-off of private sector starting around \$20 per hour. Scott was trying to strike a balance of where we are today and where we think we should be to retain people. In the past 3 months, the employees who have left VECC left because of less stress, more flexibility, and more money. In the first phase, with the new savings of the 911 circuits, which was already a budgeted cost, there is no need to increase or ask for additional assessments, and a budget adjustment is not necessary. If this holds true, we are still projected for FY22 to still see \$182 to \$250k in budget savings that could be applied to continue the program. It would just be a reallocation of funds and utilizing savings identified. Mark Reid asked if the salary money being requested will be given to new hired employees over the next few months and not to existing employees. The new proposal takes the salary system, removes the bottom 5 steps, creates a new entry level wage, and adds the 5 steps back into the back end in years 11-15. Scott also wants to add a pay-for-performance component and stop the guarantee raises outside anything specific to a COLA. Doug is concerned about the approach in giving increases without any understanding of what other agencies and the market are doing and he doesn't have sufficient data for him to feel comfortable moving forward with this. He would rather see the budget savings be used to do some of these studies. Korban added that even if this can be done budget-neutral, it's a big swing into the budget in terms of the way the line items were allocated and the way the compensation plan is structured into the budget pretty new into a new budget year. He also would like to see more analysis and background as to salary surveys. He wants to know if there is time to take, to add a sub-committee or consultant to do some analysis. Korban sees proposes to solutions to the problem, but he hasn't seen a really good articulation of the problem and why this is suddenly urgent. Scott commented that this was an unanticipated problem as a result of a pandemic, politicians, and everything going on out in society. We went from 100% staffing in March and April to down 21 people and we aren't even getting applications through the door, or they are trying to renegotiate the deal. He doesn't know what the market would be to compare SLC to. Between VECC and SLC, we are down almost 50 positions, and we are fighting for the same people. Unfortunately, we are in a business that Scott can't just turn people over every few days; it takes months to train and get them settled. Scott and Clint felt this was a pretty good approach. Jake Petersen mentioned the UCA audit and wondered if there might be an interest for this consultant to look at comparisons. Scott can make this request as an add-on, and they may already have a study which he will check into. Korban asked Scott to share with the Board the spreadsheet table that shows salaries for dispatchers and comparative benefits. He will send this out. Lisa Hartman asked if exit interviews were being completed and if the employees were leaving for higher pay and better benefits. Scott said the resignation letters were calling this out directly and we do give them an exit interview as well and he will provide a summary/chart for the Board with this information. Chief Petersen said when Scott brought this last month, his ask of him was to tell him what was needed to get full staffing and it would be considered. VECC needs full staffing to be able to answer the phones and maintain the funds from the state. The Board is in agreeance with that, it's just a matter of the process to get there. Scott is bringing a proposal he feels might help, but everyone is in a weird time, seeing the challenges with employees. He doesn't know that this proposal will fix it, but we need to figure out a way to get staffing full. He's found a way to at least fund this portion inside the budget, but it does potentially impact the agencies next year. While nothing needs to be done next year, but not doing something could create some inconsistencies between employees, creating another problem. Chief Petersen will lean towards supporting it because he wants to get the employees in the Center that Scott needs, and he's found a way to do it at least in this first year without costing the agencies more money and then there's next year to do more work.

CONSIDERATION OF EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT & RETENTION AMENDMENT & ADJUSTMENTS

Chief Petersen opened up the meeting for any final comments and a vote to move or not move this forward. Tim Tingey commented that based upon the funding sources that Scott has identified and being worried about the number of employees VECC is down, he believes this is the way to address it and is supportive of this. David Brickey appreciated where everyone is coming from and feels badly for the VECC situation, but he would vote no. Chief Petersen asked for a roll call vote on this, allowing Scott to move forward with this. After a roll call vote, the final percentage was just under 50% supporting the amendment. Chief Petersen believed that all

agreed of the timeliness, but all wanted more details and have a little more understanding. He proposed a meeting on July 29th at 2:00 p.m. to give Scott the chance to articulate some of the concerns. The rest of this meeting will be covered then as well so that more people can be present. He encouraged everyone to express interests and concerns directly with Scott and then he can package up a proposal for consideration at on the 29th.

FINANCIAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

This has been tabled until the meeting on July 29th at 2:00 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

This has been tabled until the meeting on July 29th at 2:00 p.m.

There was nothing more to discuss at this meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:11 p.m.