



MINUTES – February 27, 2025 - 7:30 AM
BENTON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES EXECUTIVE BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
Richland City Council Chambers ~ 625 Swift Blvd
Richland, WA 99352

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 a.m. by Chair Jon Amundson

Attendance

Members

Beau Beckley (*in for Steven Bauman*)

Erin Erdman

Kevin Crowley

Jon Amundson

Rachel Shaw

Brent Gerry (*Remote*)

Paul Carlyle (*Remote*)

Franklin County (2 Votes)

City of Kennewick (2 Votes)

City of Pasco (2 Votes)

City of Richland (2 Votes)

City of Prosser (1 Vote)

City of West Richland (1 Vote)

Benton County Fire Districts (1 Vote)

Absent

Michael Alvarez

Stephen Bauman

Bill Reed

Benton County (2 Votes)

Franklin County (2 Votes)

City of Benton City (1 Vote)

Also Present: BCES Executive Director Jay Atwood; SECOMM Manager Gwen Stanley; SECOMM Manager Aimee Fournier-Plante; BCES IS Administrator Doug deGraaf; Emergency Management Manager Deanna Davis; Accounting Specialist/Acting Board Secretary Jordan George

Other Attendees: Kennewick Finance Director Jessica Platt; Kennewick IT Director Cody Lewis; Richland Assistant City Manager Drew Florence

Approval of Agenda

ERIN ERDMAN MOVED AND KEVIN CROWLEY SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 9-0.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Approval of the Consent Calendar

- I. Approval of the DRAFT February 27, 2025, Benton County Emergency Services Executive Board regular meeting minutes – Jon Amundson

ERIN ERDMAN MOVED AND KEVIN CROWLEY SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR AS PRESENTED. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 11-0.

Director's Report

2. Manager's Report – Jay Atwood

Staffing

Five (5) candidates are certified on the eligibility list. One (1) of those is in background, another is scheduled for the integrity interview and the other three (3) are in pre-hire screening. Six (6) applicants are in pre-certification and are on the verge of taking CritiCall and typing tests. SECOMM has twelve and a half (12.5) vacancies currently after two new hires started in the past few weeks. They are currently in training.

Operations

Executive Director Jay Atwood has committed to spending at least two days a week in SECOMM to observe staff as he tries to get a better gauge on the culture within SECOMM and to ensure the environment becomes a place where people want to come to work, they want to stay, and they want to make dispatch a career. He feels that by being visible and present, it will help staff feel more comfortable to engage with him. SECOMM management staff are looking at operational changes that may also aid in retention.

Director Atwood has contracted with SCGI (Stuart Consulting Group, Incorporated) to facilitate leadership training. The BCES executive-level team has completed the 9-month course. A second round of training specific to the two (2) new supervisors and the four (4) existing leads concluded several months ago. Another class with communications training officers immediately followed.

The microwave project is moving along. Work on Benton County's mountaintops will begin March 10. Once completed, work will begin in Franklin County. The project is still expected to be completed in the fourth quarter of this year with system acceptance to take place in the first quarter of 2026.

The radio system project kick-off meeting will take place on March 18. An order was recently placed for mobile and portable radios that are needed for some upcoming apparatus builds. The radios are expected to arrive some time prior to April 1. Radios will be ordered as needed rather than in a few big orders as originally anticipated as Motorola doesn't have a minimum order. Their lead time is six (6) weeks and Motorola's project managers have the ability to create urgency in regard to these orders if needed. The complete list of radios is still in progress.

Items of Business

Benton County Emergency Services (BCES)

3. Election of Benton County Emergency Services Executive Board Chair and Vice-Chair for 2025

BRENT GERRY MOVED AND ERIN ERDMAN SECONDED THE MOTION TO ELECT JON AMUNDSON AS BENTON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES EXECUTIVE BOARD CHAIR. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 11-0.

BRENT GERRY MOVED AND KEVIN CROWLEY SECONDED THE MOTION TO NOMINATE MICHAEL ALVAREZ AS BENTON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES EXECUTIVE BOARD VICE-CHAIR. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 11-0.

Benton County Emergency Management (BCEM)

None

Southeast Communications Center (SECOMM)

4. Lumen Next Generation Phone System Firewalls – Approval

The firewall implementation is necessary to get BCES compliant and ready for Next Generation (NG) i3 (location service technology) which is another part of ESINet (the phone system network). We are receiving a state grant that will cover 90% of this project. The grant requires a 10% match of \$10,926.02 that will come from E911 reserves.

ERIN ERDMAN MOVED AND RACHEL SHAW SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL BY LUMEN TO IMPLEMENT NG PHONE SYSTEM FIREWALLS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$109,260.25 USING E911 RESERVES AND E911 GRANT FUNDS AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO MAKE THE NECESSARY BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 11-0.

800MHz System

5. Prosser Butte Damaged Radio Equipment Replacement – Approval

BCES radio equipment located at Prosser Butte was damaged due to a leaky roof. This site is owned by Benton PUD; the roof was repaired in July 2024.

Multiple options were investigated with Washington Cities Insurance Authority (WCIA) ultimately deciding the best action was to replace the equipment. The equipment will be replaced with new generation equipment. The claim has been approved by WCIA and will be paid for using fund balance initially with WCIA providing reimbursement. Staff will follow up to find out if there is a deductible and if so, how much.

ERIN ERDMAN MOVED AND KEVIN CROWLEY SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL FROM MOTOROLA TO REPLACE DAMAGED RADIO EQUIPMENT AT THE PROSSER BUTTE RADIO SITE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$646,438 USING 800MHz FUND BALANCE AND AUTHORIZING STAFF TO MAKE THE NECESSARY BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS.

Benton County Microwave System

None

Strategic Advisory Team (SAT)

None

BCES/BiPIN Consolidation

None

Discussion Items

6. Independence Task Force Update

BCES Executive Director Jay Atwood provided a high-level overview of the meetings held thus far by the Independence Task Force. The Road Map was reviewed with items in yellow having been completed and items in green being carry-overs still needing to be addressed. In months 7 and 8, the green highlighted items are pending and are next to be addressed. A monthly update will be added to the agenda.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 a.m.

APPROVED:



Jon Amundson, BCES Executive Board Chair

Date Approved: March 27, 2025

ATTEST:



Carole Cimrhakl, BCES Board Secretary

Date Published: April 9, 2025