



Agenda
Benton County Emergency Services Executive Board
Thursday, May 22, 2025 ~ 7:30 AM
Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers
625 Swift Boulevard

Benton County Emergency Services (BCES) Executive Board Meeting

Call to Order

Attendance

Approval of Agenda (Approved by Motion) All voting members.

Public Comments: Public comments will be limited to 2 minutes per speaker.

Consent Calendar: Items on the Consent Calendar have been distributed to Benton County Emergency Services Executive Board members in advance for reading and study, are considered to be routine, and will be enacted by one motion of the Board with no discussion. Board members may transfer individual Items of Business for deliberation before voting. All voting members.

1. Approval of the DRAFT April 24, 2025 Benton County Emergency Services Regular Board Meeting Minutes
 - Jon Amundson, City Manager
2. Approval of the DRAFT May 5, 2025 Benton County Emergency Services Executive Board Independence Workshop Special Meeting Minutes
 - Jon Amundson, City Manager

Director's Report:

3. Manager's Report
 - Jay Atwood, BCES Executive Director

Items of Business:

Benton County Emergency Services (BCES) (Approved by Motion): Voting Members: Cities of Kennewick, Pasco and Richland; Benton and Franklin County - 2 votes each. Benton County Fire District; Cities of Benton City, Prosser and West Richland - 1 vote each.

Benton County Emergency Management (BCEM) (Approved by Motion): Voting Members: Cities of Kennewick and Richland; Benton County - 2 votes each. Cities of West Richland, Prosser and Benton City - 1 vote each.

Southeast Communications Center (SECOMM) (Approved by Motion): Voting Members: Cities of Kennewick, Pasco and Richland; Benton and Franklin County - 2 votes each. Cities of Prosser and West Richland; Benton County Fire Districts - 1 vote each.

800MHz System (Approved by Motion): Voting Members: Cities of Kennewick, Pasco and Richland; Benton and Franklin County - 2 votes each.

Benton County Microwave System (Approved by Motion): Voting Members: Cities of Kennewick, Pasco, and Richland; and Benton and Franklin Counties - 2 votes each.

Strategic Advisory Team (SAT):

BCES/BiPIN Consolidation:**Discussion Items:**

4. Independence Task Force Update

Adjournment

Richland City Hall is ADA accessible. Any individual who has difficulty attending the meeting in-person may request to provide comments remotely. (Ch. 42.30 RCW) Requests for sign interpreters, audio equipment, and/or other special services must be received 48 hours prior to the meeting by calling the City Clerk's Office at 509-942-7389.



BENTON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENDA ITEM COVERSHEET

Meeting Date: 5/22/2025

Agenda Category: Consent Calendar:

Prepared By: Jon Amundson, City Manager

Subject:

Approval of the DRAFT April 24, 2025 Benton County Emergency Services Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Recommended Motion:

Summary:

DRAFT minutes from the April 24th, 2025 Benton County Emergency Services Regular Board Meeting are presented for the Board's consideration and approval.

Fiscal Impact:

Attachments:

- I. 052225 April 24, 2025 DRAFT BCES Meeting Minutes



MINUTES – April 24, 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 7:30 a.m. by Chair Jon Amundson.

Attendance

Members

Stephen Bauman

Matt Rasmussen *Remote (In for Michael Alvarez)*

Erin Erdman

Kevin Crowley

Jon Amundson

Rachel Shaw

Steven Crown (in for Brent Gerry)

Paul Carlyle *Remote*

Franklin County (2 Votes)

Benton 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

Brent Gerry

Bill Reed

Benton County (2 Votes)

City of West Richland (1 Vote)

City of Benton City (1 Vote)

Also Present: BCES Executive Director Jay Atwood; SECOMM Manager Kim Lettrick; Emergency Management Manager Deanna Davis; Richland IT Operations & Services Supervisor Blayne Smith; Accounting Specialist Jordan George; Administrative Assistant/Board Secretary Carole Cimrhakl

Other Attendees: Franklin County Administrator Brian Dansel; Benton County Sheriff Commander Mat Clarke; Connell Police Chief Chris Lee; Kennewick Finance Director Jessica Platt; Kennewick IT Director Cody Lewis; Kennewick Assistant IT Manager Tracy Troutman; Kennewick BiPIN Software Analyst II Travis Amundson; BiPIN Business Analyst Kandy Gonsalves; Prosser Police Chief John Markus; Richland Fire Chief Tom Huntington

Approval of Agenda

STEPHEN BAUMAN MOVED AND ERIN ERDMAN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 13-0.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Approval of the Consent Calendar

1. Approval of the DRAFT March 27, 2025, Benton County Emergency Services Executive Board regular meeting minutes – Drew Florence

ERIN ERDMAN MOVED AND STEPHEN BAUMAN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 13-0.

Director's Report

2. Manager's Report – Jay Atwood

Staffing

Recruitment was paused during the implementation of Workday and has since been resumed. Several candidates are in the process with one (1) in background and one (1) ready for integrity interview. Moving forward, the newly streamlined process will begin which should move applicants through the process much faster. Interviews for the BCES IT Manager position have been completed with an offer to be made soon. The Systems Analyst position will be posted soon.

Microwave

The project is moving along very quickly. Motorola is ahead of schedule. A majority of the installations are expected to be completed in August. For this reason, Motorola has requested the payment schedule be split into two (2) payments with the first due in June and the second due in the third quarter. If the payment were split, each of the Big 5 would pay \$271,750 for each installment. The final payment of \$425,681.81 will remain due in the first quarter of 2026. BCES Executive Director Jay Atwood reminded Motorola that payment terms have already been agreed to.

Radio System

With microwave work ahead of schedule, we are set up to accelerate the radio project. Motorola is projecting that all users could be migrated to the new radio system as early as June 2026.

A couple of no-cost change orders are being explored to include radio management and site acquisitions. This will ensure the project's success and will help fill the personnel deficits at BCES.

The Day Wireless contract will be routed through Purchasing with today's approval of the minutes. This allows Day Wireless to begin the census of fire apparatus radios. Once completed, a quote to install the radios will be forthcoming with the mobile radio order to follow.

Benton County Fire District I has offered workspace to Motorola for staging and installations. Motorola is working to establish a lease agreement. Equipment is currently projected to arrive between January and February with installations tentative for March.

Items of Business

Benton County Emergency Services (BCES)

None

Benton County Emergency Management (BCEM)

3. Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) Contract E25-044 Amendment I – Approval

The amendment is a result of a gap funding request by BCEM for the pre-approved purchase of ten (10) UltraRadiac Plus dosimeters.

ERIN ERDMAN MOVED AND JON AMUNDSON SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE FOR SIGNATURE AMENDMENT I TO EFSEC CONTRACT E25-044 TO INCREASE THE GOODS AND SERVICES LINE ITEM BY \$18,197 AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO MAKE THE NECESSARY BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

4. Carry-over of Grant Funds from Year Ending 2024 – Approval

The carry-over amount approved in March did not include \$2,570 of unexpended funds for the Homeland Security grant.

ERIN ERDMAN MOVED AND MATT RASMUSSEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CARRY-OVER OF EXISTING BCES GRANT FUNDS TO INCREASE THE 2025 APPROVED BCES BUDGET AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO MAKE THE NECESSARY BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

Southeast Communications Center (SECOMM)

None

800MHz System

None

Benton County Microwave System

5. Department of Commerce Grant 25-96647-052 – Approval

Although this grant was awarded in 2024, it was not finalized or received until this month (April). These funds will be used to replace the existing telecommunication system with a modernized Ethernet Microwave Solution for the Microwave/MPLS Replacement Project.

ERIN ERDMAN MOVED AND STEPHEN BAUMAN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE GRANT 25-96647-052 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$227,950 TO INCREASE THE MICROWAVE GOODS AND SERVICES CAPITAL LINE ITEM AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO MAKE THE NECESSARY BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED 10-0.

Strategic Advisory Team (SAT)

No significant updates. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 1 at 2:00 p.m. in Richland's Council Chambers.

BCES/BiPIN Consolidation

None

Discussion Items

6. Independence Task Force - Update

No meeting was held in April as a workshop is scheduled for May 5 at the Richland Public Library. Different funding models for the SECOMM portion of the budget, what a first-year operating budget might look like, and an overall budget that includes potential staff changes and costs related to the use of the radio system will be presented.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 a.m.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Jon Amundson, BCES Executive Board Chair

Carole Cimrhakl, BCES Board Secretary

Date Approved: _____

Date Published: _____



BENTON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENDA ITEM COVERSHEET

Meeting Date: 5/22/2025

Agenda Category: Consent Calendar:

Prepared By: Jon Amundson, City Manager

Subject:

Approval of the DRAFT May 5, 2025 Benton County Emergency Services Executive Board Independence Workshop Special Meeting Minutes

Recommended Motion:

Summary:

DRAFT minutes from the May 5th, 2025 Benton County Emergency Services Executive Board Independence Workshop Special Meeting are presented for the Board's consideration and approval.

Fiscal Impact:

Attachments:

- I. 050525 May 5, 2025 DRAFT BCES Independence Workshop Special Meeting Minutes



MINUTES – May 5, 2025 - 7:30 AM
BENTON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES EXECUTIVE BOARD
INDEPENDENCE WORKSHOP SPECIAL MEETING
Richland Public Library ~ 955 Northgate Drive
Richland, WA 99352

The workshop began at 1:15 p.m.

Attendance

Members

*Stephen Bauman

*Matt Rasmussen *Remote (In for Michael Alvarez)*

Erin Erdman

Kevin Crowley

Jon Amundson

Erin Gwinn *(In for Brent Gerry)*

Franklin County (2 Votes)

Benton County (2 Votes)

City of Kennewick (2 Votes)

City of Pasco (2 Votes)

City of Richland (2 Votes)

City of West Richland (1 Vote)

Absent

Michael Alvarez

Brent Gerry

Rachel Shaw

Bill Reed

Paul Carlyle

Benton County (2 Votes)

City of West Richland (1 Vote)

City of Prosser (1 Vote)

City of Benton City (1 Vote)

Benton County Fire Districts (1 Vote)

Also Present: BCES Executive Director *Jay Atwood; SECOMM Manager *Kim Lettrick; Emergency Management Manager *Deanna Davis; Richland IT Operations & Services Supervisor Blayne Smith; SECOMM Dispatch Lead *Tim Harter; Accounting Specialist *Jordan George; Administrative Assistant/Board Secretary Carole Cimrhakl

Other Attendees: Stuart Consulting Group, Inc. President *Dr. De Hicks; Stuart Consulting Group, Inc. Vice President *Donnie Quitugua; Franklin County IS Assistant Director Michael Namchek; *Connell Police Chief Chris Lee; Richland Fire Chief Tom Huntington; Benton County Fire District 1 Chief Scott LoParco; Kennewick Police Chief *Chris Guererro; Kennewick Fire Chief *Chad Michael; Kennewick Finance Director Jessica Platt; Pasco Police Chief *Ken Roske; Richland Finance Director Brandon Allen; Richland Police Chief Martin Pilcher; Richland Deputy Fire Chief *Randy Aust

**Task Force Member*

Items of Business

I. Introduction of Stuart Consulting Services, Inc.

Dr. De Hicks introduced himself and Mr. Donnie Quitugua. They have worked with communications centers for about thirty (30) years. Their objective is to get attendees up to speed with the Task Force regarding decisions or the recommendations that have already been

made around structure, governance, and what it would look like for the organization to become independent both financially and structurally to meet public safety needs.

The legal structure could evolve quickly but funding models have been difficult to nail down as some agencies see their costs go down while others see huge increases. It has proven difficult to find a simple, predictable, and equitable method.

2. 2026 BCES Stand-Alone Agency Budget – Overview

Three options were presented with discussion on fee structures and what a fair methodology might look like. Should it be a flat rate? Should owners (the Big 5) pay one rate with contracted and user agencies paying a higher rate or do we look at some other methodology for billing?

Even in a model where nothing changes, the city of Kennewick would still realize nearly a \$500,000 dollar increase in their annual assessments for dispatch services, plus the \$800,000-ish dollars for their portion of the radio system payment that is due next year in addition to about a half million that will be due in microwave assessments. A two (2) million dollar increase for 2026 is a lot of money to find to support these expenses.

Perhaps the discussion should be driven around what we want to see the independent agency look like. We can focus later on how we put together our billing methodology. We know that moving to independence hinges on sustainable funding.

Becoming independent gives us the ability to go after the one-tenth sales tax that can pay for CAD, RMS, radio system, infrastructure and maintenance, and the technicians to service that. The only thing it doesn't pay for is dispatchers and paying for dispatch labor is significantly less and much easier to fund.

3. Proposed Staffing

Positions that we anticipate we will need, positions we have already added, and positions we will need regardless of independence:

Finance Manager – likely need for independence

Accountant (upgrade) – needs to happen regardless of independence

HR Manager & Generalist – most likely will need a manager for independence but could function with a capable Generalist

IT Network Admin – we think we should add as the former BCES IT Department was seriously overloaded but don't have to fill currently

IT Network Admin (upgrade) – currently an open, budgeted position to be filled soon

Communications Technician – as we assume responsibility for the radio system, this is a necessary position regardless of independence

GIS Analyst (upgrade) – the GIS position has already been upgraded to the analyst position

Communications Supervisor – (x2) these positions had been cut years ago but the need exists to reinstitute both positions now

The positions needed for independence were figured using mid-level salaries. If we moved to independence, additional positions would likely be added using a phased approach and would not necessarily be all new money.

4. Assessment Methodology – Recommendation

Attendees agreed to push forward with independence. The next step would be to have the counties create the charter that creates the regional authority and then appoint the board (the Big 5) and have a go live date with ILA's to bridge. This allows us to prepare for a tax initiative that would potentially fund the entire organization. The new board would then be able to decide what the pathway forward for future fee structures.

We also need to analyze how much tax is actually needed before asking the public to support it and identify when the best time is to make the ask. The group agreed that we should give plenty of time to educate the public to pass the initiative. The tax would provide enough money to take the current delta of approximately \$8 million down to about \$1 million, making it much easier to fund going forward. It also would allow us to build capital for future needs.

Final takeaways:

Push towards independence, work on the charter and a date for go-live. The governance structure is built around the Big 5 who make up the Board. The Board is a County Administrator from each county and the three City Managers, one each from Kennewick, Pasco, and Richland. There are two advisory groups under the board: The SAT (Strategic Advisory Team) made up of both Law and Fire Chiefs & Sheriffs, and the Finance Advisory Team. A future third advisory group may be a technical advisory group.

The Board's job is strategic plans to approve and hold accountable, to manage the Executive Director and to take advice on policy changes stemming from operations.

County Commissioners can change the details of a charter, including dismantling it. Things would go back to where they were before. The ILA could state the agency would operate "as is" until the tax passes. Educating the public is key to passing the tax.

The next Task Force meeting will focus on branding the new organization, look at boilerplate of the charter to get input and feedback, and how to prepare for the tax initiative.

A discussion was held in April with Emergency Management from both counties with the recommendation to keep things "as is" with Benton County EM to stay within the organization and Franklin County EM to remain independent for now until there is some compelling reason to change.

Adjournment

The workshop adjourned at 3:24 p.m.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Jon Amundson, BCES Executive Board Chair

Date Approved: _____

Carole Cimrhakl, BCES Board Secretary

Date Published: _____

DRAFT



BENTON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENDA ITEM COVERSHEET

Meeting Date: 5/22/2025

Agenda Category: Director's Report

Prepared By: Jay Atwood, BCES Executive Director

Subject:
Manager's Report

Recommended Motion:

Summary:
Monthly updates from Benton County Emergency Services Management.

Fiscal Impact:

Attachments:
I. 052225 Management Report



BENTON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES EXECUTIVE BOARD MANAGER'S REPORT – Thursday, May 22, 2025

Southeast Communications (SECOMM) – Kim Lettrick/Gwen Stanley/Aimee Fournier-Plante

October 2024 Statistical Information

9-1-1 Calls = 10,651

Text to 911 = 55 Sessions (392 messages sent back and forth between dispatch and text initiators)

Non-Emergency = 13,519

Law Enforcement Events = 25,648

Fire/EMS Events = 3,381

November 2024 Statistical Information

9-1-1 Calls = 9,591

Text to 911 = 68 Sessions (521 messages sent back and forth between dispatch and text initiators)

Non-Emergency = 11,636

Law Enforcement Events = 22,646

Fire/EMS Events = 3,141

December 2024 Statistical Information

9-1-1 Calls = 9,916

Text to 911 = 97 Sessions (655 messages sent back and forth between dispatch and text initiators)

Non-Emergency = 11,811

Law Enforcement Events = 23,265

Fire/EMS Events = 3,322

January 2025 Statistical Information

9-1-1 Calls = 9,101

Text to 911 = 89 Sessions (497 messages sent back and forth between dispatch and text initiators)

Non-Emergency = 11,613

Law Enforcement Events = 25,897

Fire/EMS Events = 3,183

February 2025 Statistical Information

9-1-1 Calls = 8,732

Text to 911 = 91 Sessions (579 messages sent back and forth between dispatch and text initiators)

Non-Emergency = 10,844

Law Enforcement Events = 22,174

Fire/EMS Events = 2,989

March 2025 Statistical Information

9-1-1 Calls = 9,887

Text to 911 = 81 Sessions (488 messages sent back and forth between dispatch and text initiators)

Non-Emergency = 12,798

Law Enforcement Events = 24,792

Fire/EMS Events = 3,147

Training

Two (2) employees are currently training on primary radio positions.

Two (2) employees will complete Certified Training Officer (CTO) training May 24, 2025.

One potential call taker is in the employment process and if hired, would begin their training mid to late June 2025.

We submitted our first call taker for initial certification to the Washington State Certification Board. We have also submitted our first reclassification applications for two (2) dispatchers to be certified now as dual Law and Fire dispatchers. We received acknowledgement from the board that the applications have been received and processed.

We continue to wait for the board to approve our training program as qualified to provide certification without sending employees to the state sponsored basic call receiver or dispatch course. Due to the number of agencies submitting programs, there are 15 PSAP's (Public Safety Answering Points) in the state, it is moving slower than anticipated.

Benton County Emergency Management (BCEM) – Deanna Davis

No report.