



**RICHMOND AMBULANCE AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 16, 2021**

Present: Matt Conrad, Chairman
Weet Baldwin, Vice Chairman
Richard Bennett, Treasurer
Julia Hammond, Secretary
Kirk Roberts, Director
Lincoln Saunders, Director
Marilyn West, Director

Absent: Carlos Hopkins, Director
Kristen Larson, Director
Brandon Mencini, Director
Sheila White, Director

Counsel: Jonathan Joseph, Esq., Christian & Barton

Guests: Gregory Bussink, III, Principal, CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) *(via telephone)*

Staff: Chip Decker, Chief Executive Officer
Joseph Ornato, M.D., Operational Medical Director
Terone Green, Chief Administrative Officer
Wayne Harbour, Chief Clinical Officer
Michael Dixon, Chief Human Resources Officer
Bryan Aud, Director of Finance
Laura Bickham, Senior Executive Assistant and Assistant Secretary to the Board of Directors

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Matt Conrad called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. He welcomed Marilyn West to the RAA Board of Directors, commenting she is a long-time public servant and serves as CEO of her own consulting company, M.H. West & Co., Inc. Marilyn West stated she is honored to be part of RAA, noting the significant things the agency has done for the Richmond community for so many years.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. August 17, 2021

B. August 31, 2021 *Special Meeting of the Board*

Motion: To approve the August 17, 2021 and August 31, 2021 meeting minutes.

Made By: Weet Baldwin

Seconded: Richard Bennett

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

Ayes:

Weet Baldwin
Richard Bennett
Matt Conrad
Julia Hammond
Kirk Roberts
Marilyn West

Nays:

None

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Fiscal Year 2021 Financial Statements and Audit Report – Final Acceptance

Motion: To accept the Fiscal Year 2021 Financial Statements and Audit Report as prepared and presented by CliftonLarsonAllen, LLC (CLA).

Made By: Richard Bennett

Seconded: Julia Hammond

Discussion: Chip Decker advised Greg Bussink, Principal with CLA (RAA's outside audit firm), had called into today's meeting. He advised CLA is the same audit firm contracted by the City of Richmond. Once RAA's audit is complete, it is then submitted to the City as part of the overall package.

Greg Bussink reported CLA had completed the audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. He confirmed his attendance to the Board's Finance Committee meeting held on November 4th. He summarized both management's and CLA's responsibilities, adding CLA performs its audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the U.S. and the standards applicable to financial audits set forth in the Government Auditing Standards (GAS). It is CLA's opinion the financial statements were presented fairly in all material aspects. Greg Bussink announced CLA is issuing an opinion that will reflect an unmodified audit document ("clean opinion").

Matt Conrad thanked Greg Bussink for his report and asked the Board if there were any questions, to which there were none. Matt Conrad confirmed the audit was presented to the Finance Committee and that Board acceptance was recommended.

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

<u>Ayes:</u>	<u>Nays:</u>
Richard Bennett	None
Julia Hammond	
Matt Conrad	
Weet Baldwin	
Kirk Roberts	
Marilyn West	

B. Proposed Changes to the Procurement and Purchasing Policies

Motion: To approve the changes to the Richmond Ambulance Authority's Procurement and Purchasing Policies as presented.

Made By: Weet Baldwin

Seconded: Marilyn West

Discussion: Terone Green stated management was recommending changes to two RAA policies; the Procurement Policy and the Purchasing Policy. Bryan Aud reported the main, proposed change to the Procurement Policy was to increase the threshold for small purchases from \$50,000 to \$100,000. Purchases between \$2,500 and \$30,000 would require three bids. At least one of the three bids must include a Minority Business Enterprise/Emerging Small Business (MBE/ESB), if available. Finally, management requests to increase the spending threshold for professional services from \$30,000 to \$60,000. Bryan Aud then provided an overview of the proposed changes to the Purchasing Policy as follows: 1) Two signatures are currently required for checks over \$15,000. An increase to \$25,000 is requested, 2) Adding a section for Automated Clearing House (ACH) approval, following the same thresholds as RAA's check-signing policy, to permit approval for ACH's to be provided electronically, and 3) In accordance with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), it is recommended RAA increase the fixed asset limits from \$1,000 to \$2,500.

Matt Conrad confirmed these changes were presented to the Finance Committee and Board approval is recommended. Marilyn West stated she was impressed RAA is proposing these added efficiencies, commenting on RAA's strong financial background and performance. Matt Conrad asked when the two policies had been last updated, to which Bryan Aud

responded the Procurement Policy was updated in 2008 and the Purchasing Policy had been updated in 2017. He commented the changes to the Procurement Policy align RAA with the City's policy and follow the current Virginia Public Procurement Act.

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

<u>Ayes:</u>	<u>Nays:</u>
Weet Baldwin	None
Marilyn West	
Matt Conrad	
Richard Bennett	
Julia Hammond	
Kirk Roberts	
Lincoln Saunders	

Note: Lincoln Saunders joined the meeting during the discussion and prior to the vote.

C. Group Health Benefits Package RFP

Motion: To approve the evaluation criteria for the issuance of the Group Health Benefits Package Request for Proposals (RFP).

Made By: Julia Hammond

Seconded: Lincoln Saunders

Discussion: Michael Dixon explained the current contract with RAA's health benefits provider will expire in 2022, requiring RAA to issue an RFP. He explained the RFP is being prepared with the assistance of RAA's new licensed insurance broker. A new plan will take effect on July 1, 2022. Matt Conrad referenced the evaluation criteria provided on Page B5 of today's meeting packet. Marilyn West commented how there is a great deal of emphasis on diversity and inclusion, to which Michael Dixon agreed, adding this was taken into consideration when establishing the RFP criteria. He explained potential proposers may subcontract some of the services RAA seeks to MBE/ESB's and how the contents of the overall bid packages RAA may receive will all be taken into consideration. Matt Conrad noted the need for a volunteer from the Board to serve on the Selection Committee, commenting it was not necessary to determine who would serve at this time.

Note: Following the meeting, Julia Hammond notified Laura Bickham of her willingness to serve on the Selection Committee.

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

<u>Ayes:</u>	<u>Nays:</u>
Julia Hammond	None
Lincoln Saunders	
Matt Conrad	
Weet Baldwin	
Richard Bennett	
Kirk Roberts	
Marilyn West	

D. Capital Lease-Purchase Financing Agreement

Motion: To grant the CEO the authorization to enter into a lease-purchasing financing agreement for the acquisition of ambulances to be procured through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process led by the Virginia Municipal League (VML), pursuant to the resolution prepared and presented to the Board of Directors and the recommendation of the Finance Committee.

Made By: Richard Bennett

Seconded: Kirk Roberts

Discussion: Chip Decker reminded the Board of RAA's intent to lease ambulances this budget year as opposed to purchasing them outright. VML will serve as RAA's financial consultant to obtain the best financing terms. VML is a non-profit, non-partisan association based in Richmond; of which RAA is a long-standing member. Although the necessary funding has been appropriated in the budget, VML recommends a resolution be provided which reflects the Board's authorization for RAA to move forward. Jon Joseph requested to see a copy of the RFP prior to VML issuing it. Matt Conrad explained RAA has historically purchased its vehicles outright, however, the City encouraged RAA to follow their practice to lease its vehicles. He added how a lease-purchase saves money in the first year, but becomes much more expensive in the out years.

Lincoln Saunders inquired as to the best practice and interest of RAA, commenting he is hopeful the City can provide additional funding in the future. Chip Decker recalled the recent microchip shortage and how it had been difficult to secure the chassis, however, he commented the issue seems to be improving. Marilyn West asked if RAA will have the opportunity to serve as a participant on the RFP review panel, to which Chip Decker answered he did not see that being an issue. He commented this is the first time RAA has made this type of arrangement. Bryan Aud reported that, back in the spring when RAA was looking at interest rates, a fixed rate of 1.35% was available (for five years, leasing seven vehicles). Currently, rates are as low as .98%. RAA will need to make the first payment in February or March. Should the current allocated amount not be sufficient, the Board will be requested to approve a necessary budget adjustment.

Note: This item was not on the meeting agenda.

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

<u>Ayes:</u>	<u>Nays:</u>
Richard Bennett	None
Kirk Roberts	
Matt Conrad	
Weet Baldwin	
Julia Hammond	
Lincoln Saunders	
Marilyn West	

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION – DISCUSSIONS INVOLVING PERSONNEL MATTERS

Motion: To enter into Executive Session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) of the Code of Virginia for discussions involving personnel matters.

Made By: Weet Baldwin

Seconded: Julia Hammond

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows

Ayes:

Weet Baldwin
Julia Hammond
Matt Conrad
Richard Bennett
Kirk Roberts
Lincoln Saunders
Marilyn West

Nays:

None

Note: All members of staff and Joseph Ornato left the meeting prior to Executive Session and rejoined the meeting at its conclusion. Jon Joseph remained present during Executive Session.

Motion: To return to the normal order of business and the parties certified the matters discussed in closed session were related to personnel matters and conducted lawfully.

Made By: Weet Baldwin

Seconded: Richard Bennett

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows

Ayes:

Weet Baldwin
Richard Bennett
Matt Conrad
Julia Hammond
Kirk Roberts
Lincoln Saunders
Marilyn West

Nays:

None

Motion: To accept the recommendation of the Personnel Committee as presented in closed session at the November 16, 2021 meeting of the Board of Directors.

Made By: Weet Baldwin

Seconded: Richard Bennett

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

Ayes:

Weet Baldwin
Richard Bennett
Matt Conrad
Julia Hammond
Kirk Roberts
Lincoln Saunders
Marilyn West

Nays:

None

VI. SENIOR MANAGEMENT / STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Chief Executive Officer Report: Chip Decker reported the following:

- 1) He noted the holiday gifts distributed around the table. He thanked the Board for its continued support this year and wished everyone a happy holiday. Board members also received RAA's 30th anniversary challenge coin.
- 2) At City Council's November 8th meeting, three appointments to the Board were made: Both Weet Baldwin and Carlos Hopkins were reappointed and Marilyn West was appointed, replacing Beth Matish.
- 3) The Richmond City and Henrico County Health Districts have taken on an initiative to develop spike alert notifications to the metro-area community whenever there is an uptick in overdoses. They will put out a notification intended for community and family member awareness. One of the purposes of the spike alert notification is so if there is a "bad batch," of drugs, people in that area would be more cautious. All four localities (Henrico, Hanover, Chesterfield and Richmond) will be contributing data to the Health District. RAA has provided its "targets," that determine when an alert should be triggered, which is ten responses within a 48-hour period. The Health District would like to present this project to Council's Public Safety Committee as well as to City Council.
- 4) At Council's meeting on October 25th, they passed the first round of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, which includes a \$3,000 bonus to all first responders. Chip Decker expressed his appreciation it will include RAA personnel.
- 5) Wayne Harbour continues to serve as Acting Chief Operating Officer (COO) as RAA works on how best to move forward. Currently, there is a lot of movement at the senior level in EMS management, with many Executive Directors/CEO's leaving the business. These vacancies are then being filled by COO's moving up into that role. As a result, many EMS agencies are in search of a COO. Chip Decker thanked Wayne Harbour for his continued service.
- 6) RAA's recruitment efforts are going well. RAA is seeing full New Employee Orientation (NEO) classes. Chip Decker thanked Michael Dixon and the HR team for their hard work.
- 7) Recently moving to the BLS tiered response system has allowed RAA to increase its capacity and place additional ambulances on the street.

VII. OPERATIONAL MEDICAL DIRECTOR: Joseph Ornato reported the following:

- 1) According to a national survey, the turnover rate for full-time EMT's is 30%. For paramedics, the rate is between 15-27%. Field Supervisors' turnover rate is at 10% and Communications Center staff turnover is at 20%. This is an industrywide issue.
- 2) Based on recent data, overdose calls for assistance have nearly tripled in the last four to five years. While remaining eager to secure the next phase of grant funding for the drone delivery of the naloxone spray project, he reminded the Board the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) had pushed their timetable back for the issuance of new approvals. Although the National Institute of Health (NIH) is still very interested in seeing this project move forward, they are delaying allocation of the funding in response to the FAA's delayed approvals.

Note: Richard Bennett left the meeting prior to the Operational Medical Director's Report.

VIII. NEXT MEETING DATES

Matt Conrad requested Laura Bickham prepare a resolution for the next meeting acknowledging Beth Matish's long-standing service to the RAA Board, which Laura Bickham confirmed would be done. He then noted the upcoming meeting dates, which are follows:

- A. February 15, 2022
- B. May 17, 2022 **Annual Meeting**

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Matt Conrad adjourned the November 16, 2021 Board of Directors meeting at 9:10 a.m.

 02/15/22

Laura Bickham, Assistant Secretary