



**RICHMOND AMBULANCE AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
MAY 17, 2022
ANNUAL MEETING**

Present: Matt Conrad, Chairman
Weet Baldwin, Vice Chairman
Richard Bennett, Treasurer
Julia Hammond, Secretary
Carlos Hopkins, Director
Brandon Mencini, Director
Kristen Nye, Director
Kirk Roberts, Director
Lincoln Saunders, Director
Sheila White, Director

Absent: Marilyn West, Director

Counsel: Jonathan Joseph, Esq., Christian & Barton

Guests: Olivia Emerson, District Opioid Coordinator, United States Attorney's
Office – Eastern District of Virginia

Staff: Chip Decker, Chief Executive Officer
Joseph Ornato, M.D., Operational Medical Director
Terone Green, Chief Administrative Officer
Wayne Harbour, Chief Operating Officer
Michael Dixon, Chief Human Resources Officer
Mark Tenia, Public Relations/Media Manager
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 8:01 a.m.

Note: The meeting minutes follow the order of business and not the meeting agenda.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

III. PROJECT RECOVER – Presented by Olivia Emerson, District Opioid Coordinator, United States Attorney’s Office – Eastern District of Virginia (USAO-EDVA)

Motion: To approve the CEO to enter into a contract or agreement with the USAO-EDVA for RAA to serve as a sub-grantee in the Project RECOVER program, subject to management’s due diligence of the project.

Made By: Julia Hammond

Seconded: Brandon Mencini

Discussion: Matt Conrad introduced Olivia Emerson and advised she was in attendance at today’s meeting to provide an overview of the Project RECOVER program to the Board. Olivia Emerson announced that with the assistance of her colleague, (also with the USAO-EVA) Kimberly Ulmet, Victim/Witness Specialist & Community Outreach Coordinator, a workgroup was created to provide peer recovery support to Central Virginians suffering with substance abuse disorders. The workgroup identified the biggest issue to be the gap between connecting those in need of recovery services with those actual services. She explained Project RECOVER began with four Peer Recover Specialists. Specialists themselves have been clean for a set period of time and have completed the necessary training required to provide peer recovery support.

RAA was requested to serve as a sub-grantee for the grant the USAO-EDVA received from the sponsor, the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA). While HIDTA covers the I-95 corridor to include Petersburg, the USAO-EDVA only serves the central Virginia area (Hanover, Henrico, the City of Richmond and Chesterfield). The HIDTA’s grant is funded as a reimbursement program. Most of the \$512,000 requested will go towards salaries. There is a provision to cover indirect costs. Currently, there is a Peer Support Specialist Supervisor, Courtney Nunnally, and one Peer Support Specialist working with RAA. RAA is requested to serve as the sub-grantee for the entire project. RAA would be required to pay all of the Specialists directly (to include salaries and other costs such as cell phone service, gas, etc.) and RAA would be reimbursed.

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

<u>Ayes:</u>	<u>Nays:</u>
Julia Hammond	None
Brandon Mencini	
Matt Conrad	
Weet Baldwin	
Richard Bennett	
Carlos Hopkins	
Kristen Nye	
Kirk Roberts	
Sheila White	

Note: Carlos Hopkins, Kristen Nye and Kirk Roberts arrived to the meeting during the presentation and prior to the vote.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 15, 2022

Motion: To approve the February 15, 2022 meeting minutes.

Made By: Weet Baldwin

Seconded: Julia Hammond

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

<u>Ayes:</u>	<u>Nays:</u>
Weet Baldwin	None
Julia Hammond	
Matt Conrad	
Richard Bennett	
Carlos Hopkins	
Brandon Mencini	
Kristen Nye	
Kirk Roberts	
Sheila White	

Note: At the conclusion of the vote, Matt Conrad welcomed Carlos Hopkins back and thanked him for his service to our country.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget – Final Adoption

Motion: To adopt the Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Budget for the Richmond Ambulance Authority.

Made By: Richard Bennett

Seconded: Carlos Hopkins

Discussion: Richard Bennett requested the Board review the budget document distributed to all members. He announced a majority vote to adopt the budget was recommended by the members present at the Finance Committee's most recent meeting held on May 12th. The budget includes allowing for capital expenditures to be made through operating expenses by purchasing all ambulances planned for such purchase this year as well as next year. Chip Decker explained it was his understanding the City would be purchasing the vehicles on RAA's behalf through General Obligation (GO) bonds, freeing up funding in RAA's FY2023 operating budget. Doing so will result in a larger ending cash balance, which then carries over to RAA's beginning cash balance for FY2023. The budget also includes a 5% increase in payroll.

RAA staff has been working diligently to bring forward a sound budget to the Board. Chip Decker explained a budget is only a plan, and adjustments can be made throughout the year as the Board may see fit. It is always within the Board's purview to reallocate funding as necessary. He recalled the Mayor's proposed budget included level funding to RAA at \$4 million. RAA requested an additional \$3.5 million. He explained that after the Mayor's budget is presented, it is difficult to find such an amount of money within the City's operating budget for reallocation. Chip Decker commended City Administration for coming up with a way to make RAA "whole." In the past, RAA was asked to forgo funding to help balance the City's budget, at which time, capital was provided to RAA. He noted the City's current plan would be the second time he recalled the City to provide capital to RAA.

Matt Conrad extended his appreciation to Lincoln Saunders, Sheila White and Kristen Nye for their tremendous expression of confidence in RAA, commenting he also understands, at the conclusion of the City's budget process each year, preparation for the next year's budget immediately begins. He noted the improvement in communication and expressed his gratitude. Carlos Hopkins inquired as to the increase in travel expenses by \$100,000 to which Chip Decker explained it was due to the cancellation of all industrywide conferences, seminars, etc. over the last two years due to the pandemic.

Lincoln Saunders stated, on behalf of City Administration, there are still significant questions about the foundation of RAA's budget preparation. He expressed concern the budget reflects spending of \$6 million more than revenue over last year, adding he encourages increasing meeting frequency and implementing a process for questions to be answered by the RAA staff. He advised he is unable to vote in favor of the budget at this time, adding he understands the pressure to recruit qualified personnel and preserve revenue generation, however, is struggling with the out years' ending balances.

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

Ayes:

Richard Bennett
Carlos Hopkins
Matt Conrad
Weet Baldwin
Julia Hammond
Brandon Mencini
Kristen Nye
Kirk Roberts

Nays:

Lincoln Saunders
Sheila White

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

B. Request for Proposals – EMS Billing Services

Motion: To authorize the Chief Executive Officer to conduct a comprehensive review of the Richmond Ambulance Authority's billing functions to advance these functions and increase collection rates. This review includes the consideration of all viable options including outsourcing these functions. If outsourcing is deemed practical and beneficial to the Authority, then the Authority may issue a Request for Proposals to obtain the services of a billing contractor.

Made By: Kirk Roberts

Seconded: Brandon Mencini

Discussion: Chip Decker referred the Board to Page B2 of today's meeting packet and advised one of the suggestions from City Administration was for RAA to look into the outsourcing of reimbursement services. Staff has drafted an RFP in order to compare current in-house versus outside services. Should it be determined outsourcing is the best option, RAA would still need to retain three to four in-house employees for oversight purposes as well as to carry out certain specialized activities. He explained RAA's CEO and Director of Reimbursement are held personally responsible for ensuring proper billing activities, adding that is why RAA has external audits performed. Should it be determined outsourcing is the most viable option, a member from the Board would be asked to serve as a member of the RFP Selection Committee.

Chip Decker advised some outside companies use the same billing software RAA currently uses, making the deciding factors the quality of their work as well as how aggressive they collect on RAA's behalf. He confirmed an outside billing company would not replace RAA's external collection agencies. Brandon Mencini mentioned he had recently assisted with the issuance of a collections agency RFP, adding it was part of a nationwide comparison that was conducted and volunteered his assistance. Sheila White stated it would be helpful to see the audit results mentioned earlier to which Matt Conrad requested Laura Bickham share the audit report with the entire Board. Terone Green reported RAA's Compliance Manager contacts the audit firm, Page Wolfberg & Wirth, LLC (PWW), following the completion of a previous audit, in order to begin the process again. Chip Decker added RAA also performs internal audits regularly, which are conducted through random sampling.

Kirk Roberts noted the word "shall," contained in the recommended motion, and suggested replacing it with "may," when referring to the issuance of an RFP. Chip Decker concurred, and Matt Conrad requested a motion to proceed as amended. Brandon Mencini reiterated his willingness to assist, and offered to serve on the Selection Committee.

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

<u>Ayes:</u>	<u>Nays:</u>
Kirk Roberts	None
Brandon Mencini	
Matt Conrad	
Weet Baldwin	
Julia Hammond	
Richard Bennett	
Carlos Hopkins	
Kristen Nye	
Lincoln Saunders	
Sheila White	

VI. ANNUAL MEETING

A. Election of Officers

Matt Conrad announced the May meeting serves as the Board's Annual Meeting, at which time, the Election of Officers takes place. He stated he is about to complete his second term serving as Board Chairman, commenting he believes RAA is one of the finest-run organizations. He stated he looks forward to his continued service on the Board as its Past Chairman.

Matt Conrad announced the names of the current Officers of the Board. He then opened the floor for nominations for Chairperson. Julia Hammond nominated Weet Baldwin. Matt Conrad asked if there were any other nominations, to which there were none. Matt Conrad opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chairperson. Weet Baldwin nominated Julia Hammond. Matt Conrad asked if there were any other nominations, to which there were none. Matt Conrad opened the floor for nominations for Treasurer. Julia Hammond nominated Kirk Roberts. Matt Conrad asked if there were any other nominations, to which there were none. Matt Conrad opened the floor for nominations for Secretary. Weet Baldwin nominated Marilyn West. Matt Conrad asked if there were any other nominations, to which there were none.

Motion: To close the floor to nominations for Chairperson of the RAA Board of Directors.

Made By: Julia Hammond

Seconded: Carlos Hopkins

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

Ayes:

Julia Hammond
Carlos Hopkins
Matt Conrad
Weet Baldwin
Richard Bennett
Brandon Mencini
Kristen Nye
Kirk Roberts
Lincoln Saunders
Sheila White

Nays:

None

Motion: To close the floor to nominations for Vice Chairperson of the RAA Board of Directors.

Made By: Richard Bennett

Seconded: Brandon Mencini

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

Ayes:

Richard Bennett
Brandon Mencini
Matt Conrad
Weet Baldwin
Julia Hammond
Carlos Hopkins
Kristen Nye
Kirk Roberts
Lincoln Saunders
Sheila White

Nays:

None

Motion: To close the floor to nominations for Treasurer of the RAA Board of Directors.

Made By: Richard Bennett

Seconded: Weet Baldwin

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

<u>Ayes:</u>	<u>Nays:</u>
Richard Bennett	None
Weet Baldwin	
Matt Conrad	
Julia Hammond	
Carlos Hopkins	
Brandon Mencini	
Kristen Nye	
Kirk Roberts	
Lincoln Saunders	
Sheila White	

Motion: To close the floor to nominations for Secretary of the RAA Board of Directors.

Made By: Julia Hammond

Seconded: Weet Baldwin

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

<u>Ayes:</u>	<u>Nays:</u>
Julia Hammond	None
Weet Baldwin	
Matt Conrad	
Richard Bennett	
Carlos Hopkins	
Brandon Mencini	
Kristen Nye	
Kirk Roberts	
Lincoln Saunders	
Sheila White	

Motion: To adopt the slate of officers elected by acclamation at the May 17, 2022 RAA Board of Directors Annual Meeting.

Made By: Richard Bennett

Seconded: Carlos Hopkins

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

<u>Ayes:</u>	<u>Nays:</u>
Richard Bennett	None
Carlos Hopkins	
Matt Conrad	
Weet Baldwin	
Julia Hammond	
Brandon Mencini	
Kristen Nye	
Kirk Roberts	
Lincoln Saunders	
Sheila White	

Note: Matt Conrad left the meeting following the conclusion of the Election of Officers, at which time, Weet Baldwin presided over the remainder of the meeting.

B. Committee Membership

Weet Baldwin referenced the document distributed to the Board titled, *Board of Directors – Standing Committee Membership* and asked if there were any proposed changes to the current membership structure. Chip Decker confirmed all Board members are welcome to serve on any committee(s). Sheila White announced she would like to serve on the Personnel Committee. Carols Hopkins announced he wished to serve on the Finance and Operations & Clinical Committees. Julia Hammond announced Marilyn West requested to serve on the Personnel Committee.

VII. SENIOR MANAGEMENT / STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

- 1) This week is National EMS Week. As part of a weeklong celebration of RAA's frontline staff, activities are planned throughout the week. He also noted the recognition provided by the area hospitals, with food and gifts for the field providers, commenting they have always been supportive.
- 2) RAA is pleased to be able to celebrate its employees in person, not having been able to do so for the last two years. He noted RAA's Annual Appreciation Celebration, taking place this Saturday, May 21st at The Speak Easy beginning at 6:00pm. Those Board members who have not yet had an opportunity to RSVP and wish to attend were asked to let Laura Bickham know.
- 3) Per the bylaws, the new slate of officers takes effect on July 1st.
- 4) One of RAA's SUV's was involved in a crash, having been t-boned at an intersection yesterday morning. Fortunately, the RAA Supervisor driving the vehicle is doing fine; the SUV took the brunt of the impact.
- 5) Richard Bennett asked how the Chairperson(s) of the various Committees are established, to which Chip Decker responded the bylaws are silent to how they are determined. Historically, the Chairperson is either appointed by the Board Chairperson or among each Committee's membership.

VIII. OPERATIONAL MEDICAL DIRECTOR: Joseph Ornato reported the following:
This time last year, VCU had applied for \$1.75 million in grant funding sponsored by the National Institute of Health (NIH) for the drone delivery of naloxone project. At that time, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued a new regulations approval process. More recently, the FAA has put in other requirements for additional drone testing to be completed. Approximately one month ago, VCU submitted its Phase I grant funding request to acquire the data needed to begin the program. He commented it had been a long journey, adding it takes a great deal of time when dealing with two, separate federal agencies (NIH and FAA). He mentioned the Grant Manager with the NIH has been quite supportive of the project. He advised the Board will be kept informed as the project progresses.

IX. RICHMOND EMERGENCY MEDIAL SERVICES WEEK PROCLAMATION – Presented by Councilwoman Kristen Nye, 4th District, Richmond City Council and Member, Richmond Ambulance Authority Board of Directors
Kristen Nye presented Chip Decker with the Richmond Emergency Medical Services Week Proclamation. She extended her sincere appreciation to Chip Decker and the RAA staff for serving the Richmond community with the very best in EMS care. The Board applauded the recognition and thanked Kristen Nye.

X. NEXT MEETING DATES

Weet Baldwin reminded the Board the RAA Employee Appreciation Celebration is this Saturday, May 21st at 6:00 p.m., commenting he looked forward to seeing everyone. He then noted the dates of the upcoming meetings, which are as follows:

- A. August 16, 2022
- B. November 15, 2022

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: To adjourn the May 17, 2022 meeting of the RAA Board of Directors.

Made By: Richard Bennett

Seconded: Julia Hammond

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

Ayes:
Richard Bennett
Julia Hammond
Weet Baldwin
Carlos Hopkins
Brandon Mencini
Kristen Nye
Kirk Roberts
Lincoln Saunders
Sheila White

Nays:
None


Laura Bickham, Assistant Secretary