



**RICHMOND AMBULANCE AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 21, 2023**

Present: Weet Baldwin, Chairman
Julia Hammond, Vice Chairman (*via telephone*)
Kirk Roberts, Treasurer
Marilyn West, Secretary
Carlos Hopkins, Director
Katherine Jordan, Director
Sheila White, Director

Absent: Matt Conrad, Director
Lincoln Saunders, Director
Joey Trapani, Director

Counsel: Jonathan Joseph, Esq., Christian & Barton

Staff: Chip Decker, Chief Executive Officer
Joseph Ornato, M.D., Operational Medical Director
Terone Green, Chief Administrative Officer
Angel Carter, Chief Human Resources Officer
Laura Bickham, Senior Executive Assistant and Assistant Secretary to the Board of Directors



I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Weet Baldwin called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

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

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

III. STANDING COMMITTEES/STAFF UPDATES

A. Operations and Clinical: Weet Baldwin reported the following:

- 1) The Committee met on January 31st and reviewed Section 7A of the report prepared by The Robert Bobb Group (section on response standards and type). The Committee recommends the report be divided for each respective Committee's review and comment.
- 2) The Double Sequential External Defibrillation video was presented and it was explained why this method can be more successful than standard defibrillation.
- 3) An update on RAA's participation in the ET3 program was provided. The Cleveland Clinic is currently providing telehealth as part of the program and as more people are enrolled, the data will be presented.
- 4) RAA's Advanced EMT class is in progress, taking place on Tuesdays and Thursdays. He stated he had an opportunity to stop in and introduce himself to the class. RAA is in the midst of rolling out a Paramedic program. Marilyn West commented it was a very good meeting.

B. Finance: Kirk Roberts reported the following:

- 1) The Finance Committee is scheduled to meet on March 13th, which will be immediately preceded by an Investment Committee meeting. There have been no significant changes to RAA's risk profile.
- 2) Last month, Kirk Roberts joined RAA for a meeting with Sabrina Joy-Hogg, Deputy CAO-Finance and Administration, and Jason May, Director of Budget & Strategic Planning, to review the City's budget process. The group discussed the fact that RAA is required to submit its subsidy request very early and before having a true perspective of how things are going in order to submit a realistic request to the City. RAA continues to work on its FY2024 budget but may fall short on an accurate subsidy request. Katherine Jordan reported the Mayor provides the proposed budget to Council, however Council has not yet received the Richmond Public Schools' budget. It is her understanding work is currently underway on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).
- 3) He noted the recommendation in the consultants' report includes RAA raising rates and commented that doing so may pose some challenges.
- 4) The Reimbursement team is working on rolling out the new ZOLL billing system. The goal is to increase the collection rate while decreasing the days in accounts receivable.

Note: Sheila White arrived to the meeting during the Finance update.

- 5) Weet Baldwin advised Sheila White the Board was discussing the alignment of RAA in the City's budget preparation process. Sheila White reported the Mayor's budget will be presented to Council on March 6th. Chip Decker referenced the recent meeting with Sabrina Joy-Hogg and Jason May, commenting it was a very productive meeting. He mentioned they discussed the need to have RAA moved from the non-departmental/contributions' section of the budget. Also discussed was the potential of having RAA join the City's healthcare plan, should costs get out of hand for RAA. He noted Sabrina Joy-Hogg's and Jason May's understanding to better streamline the City's budget process and changing RAA's submission timeline. Currently, RAA is required to submit its request very early in the process, resulting in a submission based only one quarter's worth of data without the knowledge of what the rest of the year will look like. All attendees at the meeting agreed RAA's submission timeline needs to change.

Katherine Jordan asked if RAA's submission timeline was part of the City Code and whether Council's consideration to change it was needed. She then asked Sheila White what the absolute latest date is to have everything submitted, to which Sheila White responded she could not speak for Jason May, commenting it was his call. Chip Decker reported RAA's subsidy request is lower overall, adding the lease of only one ambulance was included. He explained how the cost of an ambulance had significantly increased. This year, it costs \$239,000, and it was \$207,000 last year. Next year, the manufacturer will charge \$350,000. He reported Sabrina Joy-Hogg suggested that instead of including RAA ambulances in the CIP using General Obligation (GO) bonds, consideration be given to increasing RAA's subsidy amount and adding on a lease payment. This way, the City does not have to serve as RAA's leasing agent.

- 6) **Motion:** To allow Julia Hammond to participate remotely in the February 21, 2023 meeting of the Board of Directors.

Made By: Kirk Roberts

Seconded: Carlos Hopkins

Discussion: Weet Baldwin announced Julia Hammond had called into today's meeting. Kirk Roberts requested, in accordance with Board policy, she announce her name, current location, and the specific reason for the request to join the meeting remotely. Julia Hammond stated her name and advised she was currently at home with her sick child.

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

Ayes:

Kirk Roberts
Carlos Hopkins
Weet Baldwin
Katherine Jordan
Marilyn West
Sheila White

Nays:

None

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Workers' Compensation Insurance RFP

Motion: To approve the scoring criteria for the issuance of the Workers' Compensation Insurance Request for Proposals (RFP).

Made By: Katherine Jordan

Seconded: Marilyn West

Discussion: Chip Decker advised it was time to issue the Request for Proposals (RFP) for workers' compensation insurance. The current policy ends on July 1, 2023. An RFP has been prepared with the assistance of RAA's licensed broker who will also assist in the evaluation of the proposals. The RFP will be finalized upon approval by the Board of the evaluation criteria, which is included in today's meeting packet on Page B1. He requested a member of the Board to serve on the Selection Committee. Sheila White volunteered to participate.

Sheila White inquired about RAA's approach to developing the evaluation criteria, to which Laura Bickham responded RAA's licensed insurance broker assisted with revisions to the criteria to better suit RAA's needs. Sheila White asked about the ten points allocated to Miscellaneous Factors. Angel Carter referenced the RFP document and responded it includes an AM Best rating of A or above, requiring the selected carrier be admitted to conduct business in Virginia, agreement to comply with all RFP specifications and past experience with similar risks to include references from other clients.

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

Ayes:

Katherine Jordan
Marilyn West
Weet Baldwin
Julia Hammond
Kirk Roberts
Carlos Hopkins
Sheila White

Nays:

None

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. January 19, 2023

B. November 15, 2022

Motion: To approve the January 19, 2023 and November 15, 2022 meeting minutes.

Made By: Marilyn West

Seconded: Carlos Hopkins

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: The votes were recorded as follows:

Ayes:

Marilyn West
Carlos Hopkins
Weet Baldwin
Julia Hammond
Kirk Roberts
Katherine Jordan
Sheila White

Nays:

None

VI. STANDING COMMITTEES/STAFF UPDATES *(continued)*

C. Personnel: Julia Hammond reported the following:

- 1) At the Committee's last meeting, the CEO's annual performance evaluation process was discussed. Chip Decker was requested to contact other EMS CEO's to see if they would be willing to share the evaluation form and/or process their Board of Directors use. She stated it was her understanding Chip Decker has begun to receive responses and would soon be sharing an evaluation form he received.

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

- 1) RAA's 2022 Annual Report was distributed around the table to all Board members. At Council's Public Safety Committee meeting in March, Chip Decker will present the Report (as required by ordinance).
- 2) He recalled the donation of an ambulance to Ukraine in November, commenting it had reached its destination and is currently in service. He announced RAA had received a handwritten note, a Ukrainian flag, and patch (worn by a Ukrainian soldier), which he showed to the Board. At 10:30 a.m. today, Chip Decker will be interviewed by Wayne Covil with CBS-6 and extended the Board an invitation to join.
- 3) Council is now in receipt of The Robert Bobb Group's report. RAA has begun implementation of a number of recommendations the report included. The public safety Chiefs have already begun to meet monthly. A daily public safety coordination call has been implemented, however, it is uncertain how long that will continue. This is due to coordination meetings already taking place and occur as needed. As a result, the daily calls may be phased out.
- 4) He reminded the Board that The Baldrige Group handles telephonic satisfaction and engagement surveys on RAA's behalf in an effort to understand the experience with RAA from the patient's perspective. RAA has consistently performed well, with this past January's results proving to be one of the highest on record. The overall engagement score was 85.21%, versus January of last year at 71.84%. Overall patient satisfaction was 98.83% compared to January of last year at 97.93%. Carlos Hopkins inquired about the number of calls made, to which Chip Decker responded 100 calls/month.
- 5) Senator Tim Kaine is currently working on developing a workforce bill and Chip Decker was asked to weigh in to "help find synergy," with the current paramedic and EMT workforce shortage. Senator Kaine is a member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pension (HELP) Committee and the Committee met on the topic on February 16th. Senator Kaine was a member of the RAA Board.

Chip Decker announced there is a proposed State bill that would allow paramedics to administer scheduled drugs at medical facilities at which they are employed. He commented this would further blur the line between a certified paramedic and a licensed, registered nurse, explaining facilities may be trying to replace traditional nursing roles with paramedics. Weet Baldwin asked if there was any movement on the proposed bill, to which Carlos Hopkins advised it had passed both the House and Senate. It is now with the Secretary to develop a process, adding there is still time to weigh in. Kirk Roberts noted it would likely result in significant pressure to increase wages. Chip Decker agreed, stating it was his point to Senator Kaine how non-profit agencies cannot compete with for-profit hospitals.

- 6) The service zone map found on Page C9 of today's meeting packet reflects the new zone realignment rolled out on December 1, 2022.
- 7) Angel Carter has been selected as RAA's Chief Human Resources Officer. She has been with RAA since October 2021 as the Talent Acquisition Specialist and has served as Interim Chief Human Resources Officer since September 2022.
- 8) Staff is currently working on RAA's reaccreditation with the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS). CAAS accreditation signifies an agency has met the "gold standard" determined by the ambulance industry to be essential as a modern emergency medical services provider. These standards often exceed those established by state or local regulations. The accreditation process includes close examination of all policies and procedures and an onsite visit by the CAAS reviewers. He commented RAA's legal counsel also plays a role in the process.
- 9) There is a vacancy on the Board due to Brandon Mencini's resignation. RAA is hoping to fill the seat with another member of HCA leadership, commenting HCA is a stakeholder and it would be beneficial to have their assistance and representation. An application has been submitted and it is Chip Decker's understanding it will be considered at Council's Public Safety Committee meeting in March.

VII. OPERATIONAL MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT Joseph Ornato reported the following:

- 1) He noted the new concept of Double Sequential External Defibrillation, which involves the use of two defibrillators. Public awareness has increased since the survival of Damar Hamlin, the NFL player who suffered a cardiac arrest during a game on live TV. Toronto EMS explored the use of a technique called Double Sequential External Defibrillation, whereby rapid sequential shocks from two defibrillators are administered with vector-change (VC) defibrillation (switching defibrillation pads to an anterior-posterior position). They compared it to standard defibrillation among patients who remain in refractory ventricular fibrillation (VF) during out of hospital cardiac arrest. They've reported a 20% success rate of patients surviving neurologically intact.

Joseph Ornato noted the Operations & Clinical Committee viewed the training video, which he presented to the Old Dominion EMS Alliance (ODEMSA) – the regional alliance responsible for setting protocols and standards. The technique will be discussed with the Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) subcommittee.

He explained when there is no success with medication or defibrillation in the prehospital setting, ECMO equipment is used by the receiving hospital. Only a handful of hospitals in the country offer it which include Minneapolis, Los Angeles, and Richmond would be the third. Richmond is combining the Double Sequential External Defibrillation technique with this initiative.

- 2) Currently, there are 100,000 deaths caused by overdoses, with 70,000 of those involving fentanyl use. The numbers are only climbing. He provided an update on the drone delivery of naloxone spray project. While naloxone is currently available at retail pharmacies, it is quite expensive. The focus is to get it into the hands of the community.

He expressed his long-standing commitment to the research of cardiac arrests and opioid overdoses. VCU will be co-applying with Duke University for funding, through the American Heart Association, to continue the research of out of hospital cardiac arrest survival. The deadline to apply is April 4th. The application will include the drone delivery of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and naloxone. He explained Richmond would have one drone and another would be in James City County. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) permits a drone to be flown within a two-mile radius. Richmond would be one of the first major communities to use drones for medical purposes.

VIII. NEXT MEETING DATES

Weet Baldwin noted the dates of the upcoming meetings, which are as follows:

- a. May 16, 2023 ****Annual Meeting*****
- b. August 15, 2023

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Weet Baldwin adjourned the February 21, 2023 Board of Directors meeting at 8:55 a.m.

 Laura Bickham 5/16/23

Laura Bickham, Assistant Secretary