



**RICHMOND AMBULANCE AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 20, 2024**

Present: Weet Baldwin, Chairman  
Julia Hammond, Vice Chairperson  
Kirk Roberts, Treasurer (*via MS Teams*)  
Marilyn West, Secretary  
Mark Hickman, Director  
Carlos Hopkins, Director  
Drew Walker, Director

Absent: Katherine Jordan, Director  
Lincoln Saunders, Director  
Joey Trapani, Director  
Sheila White, Director

Counsel: Jonathan Joseph, Esq., Christian & Barton

Staff: Chip Decker, Chief Executive Officer  
Terone Green, Chief Administrative Officer  
Ryan Martinette, Chief Operating Officer  
Wayne Harbour, Chief Clinical Officer  
Angel Dove, 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 8:00 a.m. He welcomed Mark Hickman, RAA's newest Board member, to the meeting. Mark Hickman was appointed to the Board in September and is the Senior Director of Government Relations for VCU. Weet Baldwin noted Ryan Martinette's attendance at today's meeting. Ryan Martinette began his position as RAA's Chief Operating Officer in December.

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

## II. COMMITTEE REPORTS

**A. Operations & Clinical Committee:** Weet Baldwin reported the following:

- 1) The Committee met on February 1<sup>st</sup>.
- 2) The Committee received an update since the implementation of the response ("chase") car, which has been popular with the crews. Response cars have helped to improve RAA's ALS response to critical patients.
- 3) Overall response time targets were discussed and Chip Decker provided a status update with regard to hospital drop times. The wait times at hospitals have increased due to the resurgence of COVID, influenza and RSV.
- 4) The Committee was provided an update on RAA's in-house Paramedic class. Nine full-time and five part-time providers have 'graduated' and have become certified Paramedics. A resolution of recognition has been prepared for Board consideration.
- 5) 11 students are enrolled in RAA's in-house EMT-Basic class which began on February 19<sup>th</sup> and will conclude on April 30<sup>th</sup>.
- 6) Dr. Ornato provided an update on the drone delivery project. He continues to work with his research partners to move the project forward.

## III. STAFF REPORTS

**Chief Executive Officer's Report:** Chip Decker reported the following:

- 1) For the last few years, Wayne Harbour has served in both leadership capacities overseeing RAA's Clinical and Operations Departments. He advised Ryan Martinette, Chief Operating Officer, joined RAA on December 4<sup>th</sup>. Ryan Martinette introduced himself to the Board and provided an overview of his background and experience. He is a native of Virginia Beach and received his Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Administration from Southern New Hampshire University. He joined the U.S. Army following the attacks of 9/11. He served as a medic throughout his military career (stationed in Iraq in 2005), and was in charge of the Orthopedic Clinic at the Kenner Army Health Clinic. In 2011, he joined the Bensley-Bermuda Volunteer Rescue Squad in Chesterfield County and became President in 2015. In 2017, he began as a Firefighter/Paramedic with Hanover County Fire & EMS.
- 2) Council's Public Safety Committee will receive RAA's 2023 Annual Report at their upcoming meeting on February 27<sup>th</sup> as required by ordinance.
- 3) A contract with EMS Management & Consultants (EMS/MC) has been signed and the "go live" date is April 1<sup>st</sup>. EMS/MC will be providing RAA with outside EMS billing services. Chip Decker recalled outsourcing RAA's billing services was a

recommendation made by the consultants. Beginning April 1<sup>st</sup>, RAA will begin a reduction in force of the Reimbursement Department. RAA is setting up opportunities for current employees to interview with EMS/MC. Additionally, RAA will be offering severance packages and continues to work closely with outside employment counsel throughout this process.

- 4) Management met with The Robert Bobb Group on January 9<sup>th</sup> to discuss RAA's FY2025 subsidy request and the budget process. On February 27<sup>th</sup>, RAA is scheduled to meet with Lincoln Saunders, the City's Chief Administrative Officer, Sabrina Joy-Hogg, Deputy CAO-Finance & Administration, and members of the City's budget team. RAA's Finance Committee is scheduled to meet on March 19<sup>th</sup>, at which time, the first draft of the budget will be presented.

RAA has requested a subsidy of \$6.9 million, however it is anticipated the City intends to keep RAA at level funding (\$5.4 million), which will not be sufficient. RAA continues to work towards securing the additional \$1.5 million needed. Weet Baldwin asked Chip Decker if he believed City Administration recalls the need for RAA to maintain a cash reserve of three months' worth of operating expenses, to which Chip Decker responded he does not. He advised City Council is intent on funding RAA at the level that is needed.

**Note:** Drew Walker arrived to the meeting during the report.

This afternoon, Chip Decker will be joining a meeting that will also include participation from the American Ambulance Association, RAA's outside lobbyist, as well as a Senior Policy Analyst from Lincoln Saunder's office. The meeting has been scheduled to discuss an increase in the state Medicaid reimbursement rate for ambulance transports with the hope of adoption during the 2025 Virginia General Assembly Session. There has not been an increase in over ten years and many states have already implemented an increase to be in parity with the Medicare allowable rate. Another item, spearheaded by the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) and their intermediary, Modivcare (formerly LogistiCare), was to implement a Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) supplemental payment program. It was included in the budget, however, was later removed. GEMT is a cost recovery program used by many states to help compensate ambulance transportation providers with low Medicaid reimbursement rates. The Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) are federal dollars used to offset a state's expense and once a year, the federal government will "true up" the difference between Medicaid/Medicare and retail rates.

- 5) RAA's agency license is up for renewal. State licenses are valid for two years. Early next month, the State's Office of EMS (OEMS) will be inspecting RAA's documentation as well as conduct vehicle inspections.
- 6) The investigation of OEMS regarding missing money is ongoing. RAA used to be able to obtain grant funding through OEMS for capital items (prior to having to lease), at which time, the State would pay half. For the foreseeable future, all grant funding programs are on hold. The annual EMS Symposium has also been placed on hold. The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) has hired Fitch & Associates, an outside emergency services consultant group, to assist with running OEMS. This is the same group hired by the City to implement the setup ad structure of RAA. The

individual from Fitch & Associates onsite locally to assist OEMS was formerly with the Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) located in Tulsa, Oklahoma - a high-performance EMS agency and fellow member of the Academy of International Mobile Healthcare Integration (AIMHI). Additionally, a former RAA Lieutenant now with Fitch & Associates was also assigned to assist OEMS.

- 7) On March 8<sup>th</sup>, RAA will be hosting students from KMU, a medical university located in Taiwan. A total of 56 people are expected. The group consists of hospital administrators, doctors and other healthcare professionals. They visit RAA annually to learn about EMS and how RAA uses data to determine everything from predictor models to peak efficiencies.
- 8) Upcoming changes to the region's medication kit exchange program are forthcoming. Currently, RAA receives a medication kit from the hospital pharmacy. When a medication is used, the seal is broken and the provider returns the used kit to the hospital for replenishment. Hospital staff are unaware who the patient is that received the medication. Some time ago, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) raised concern and RAA has recently learned the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has now expressed similar concerns. As a result, changes to the medication kit exchange program will be implemented much sooner than expected (on November 1, 2024). Licensed EMS agencies will be required to hold a pharmacy license and obtain a Controlled Substance Registration (CSR). RAA is one of only two agencies in Virginia with a pharmacy license. Drew Walker asked what may have precipitated the change, to which Chip Decker responded the DEA is citing a violation of their regulations requiring only a pharmacy can dispense a medication to a known person.

**Note:** Carlos Hopkins arrived to the meeting following the report.

#### **IV. OPERATIONAL MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Absent / No Report.

**Motion:** To allow Kirk Roberts to participate remotely in the February 20, 2024 meeting of the Board of Directors.

**Made By:** Julia Hammond

**Seconded:** Carlos Hopkins

**Discussion:** Weet Baldwin announced Kirk Roberts had called into today's meeting. Julia Hammond requested, in accordance with Board policy, he announce his name, current location, and the reason for the request to join the meeting remotely. Kirk Roberts stated his name and advised he was currently in the Bahamas.

**Motion Passed:** The votes were recorded as follows:

**Ayes:**

Julia Hammond  
Carlos Hopkins  
Weet Baldwin  
Marilyn West  
Mark Hickman  
Drew Walker

**Nays:**

None

**V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion:** To approve the November 28, 2023 meeting minutes.

**Made By:** Julia Hammond

**Seconded:** Drew Walker

**Discussion:** None

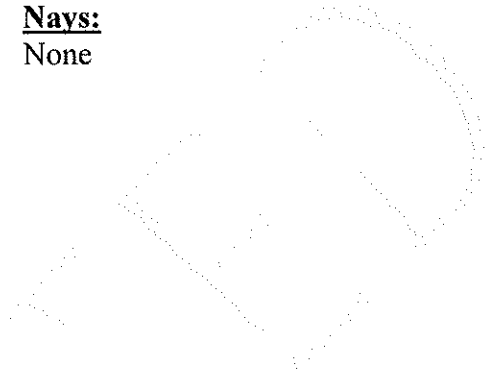
**Motion Passed:** The votes were recorded as follows:

**Ayes:**

- Julia Hammond
- Drew Walker
- Weet Baldwin
- Kirk Roberts
- Marilyn West
- Mark Hickman
- Carlos Hopkins

**Nays:**

None



**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Funds Transfer/Cash Reserve Policy**

**Motion:** To adopt the Funds Transfer/Cash Reserve Policy as presented.

**Made By:** Marilyn West

**Seconded:** Carlos Hopkins

**Discussion:** Chip Decker referred the Board to the proposed policy on Page B2 of today's meeting packet. He explained the Board approves all policies and management implements processes and procedures in accordance with those policies. He explained the policy is twofold - one includes the recommendation made by City Council to memorialize RAA's need to maintain three months of operating funding and the other came from City Administration for the control of activity pertaining to RAA's savings account. The policy includes language allowing for the transfer of funds to/from the savings account.

**Motion Passed:** The votes were recorded as follows:

**Ayes:**

- Marilyn West
- Carlos Hopkins
- Weet Baldwin
- Julia Hammond
- Kirk Roberts
- Mark Hickman
- Drew Walker

**Nays:**

None

**B. Resolution of Recognition – Completion of RAA’s Paramedic Program**

**Motion:** To adopt the resolution as presented recognizing those field providers who have successfully completed the Richmond Ambulance Authority’s Paramedic Program.

**Made By:** Carlos Hopkins

**Seconded:** Julia Hammond

**Discussion:** Some of RAA’s Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT’s) recently completed a ten-month Paramedic Program which provided them with the necessary training for specific skills necessary to qualify them to treat patients at a higher level of care. Management will be arranging to have them each recognized, at which time, they will receive a certificate of accomplishment and a copy of today’s proposed resolution.

**Motion Passed:** The votes were recorded as follows:

**Ayes:**

Carlos Hopkins  
Julia Hammond  
Weet Baldwin  
Kirk Roberts  
Marilyn West  
Mark Hickman  
Drew Walker

**Nays:**

None

**Note:** This item was not on the meeting agenda.

**VII. NEXT MEETING DATES**

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

- A. May 21, 2024 **\*\*Annual Meeting\*\***
- B. August 20, 2024

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** To adjourn the February 20, 2024 meeting of the RAA Board of Directors.

**Made By:** Julia Hammond

**Seconded:** Marilyn West

**Discussion:** None

**Motion Passed:** The votes were recorded as follows

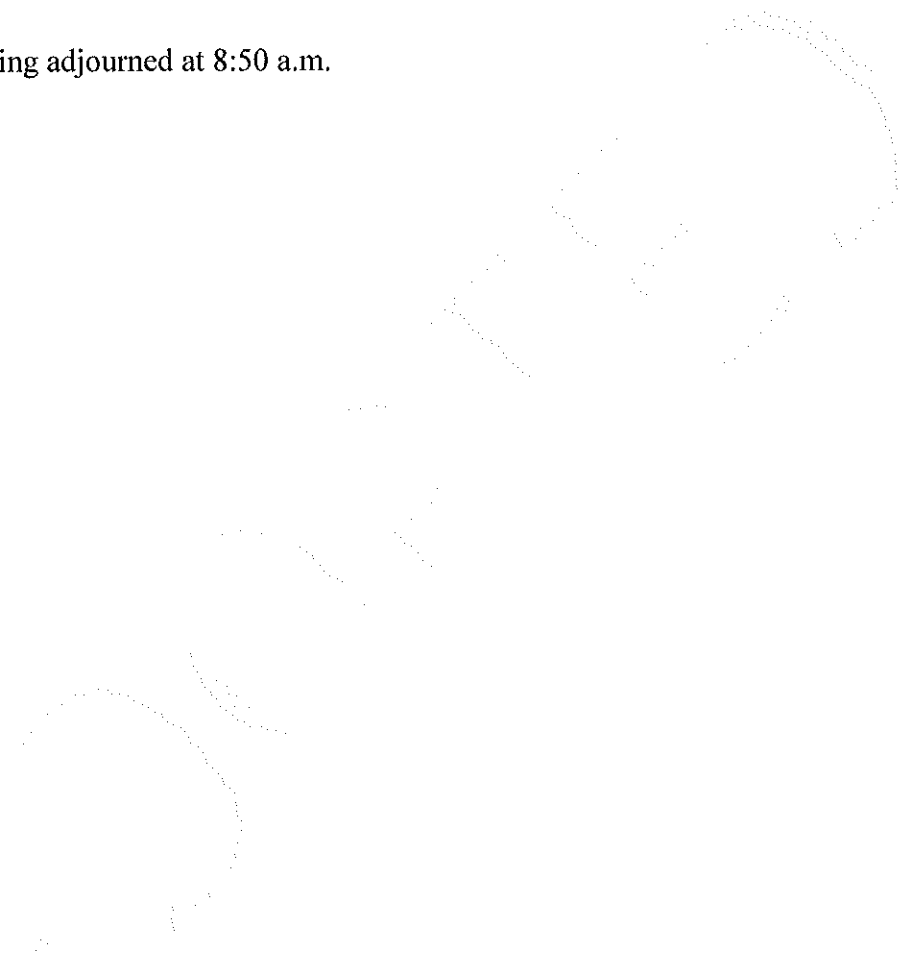
**Ayes:**

Julia Hammond  
Marilyn West  
Weet Baldwin  
Kirk Roberts  
Mark Hickman  
Carlos Hopkins  
Drew Walker

**Nays:**

None

**Note:** The meeting adjourned at 8:50 a.m.

  
*Laura Bickham - 05/21/24*  
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**Laura Bickham, Assistant Secretary**