

**Financial Assistance Review Committee (FARC)  
Quarterly Meeting  
Embassy Suites - Richmond  
Glen Allen, Virginia  
February 2, 2023  
10:00 AM**

Members Present:	Members Absent:	Administration Staff:	Staff/Other Guests:
Kevin Dillard, Chairman	Tracy Hanger (excused)	Michael Berg	Gary Brown
JC Bolling, Vice Chairman		Linwood Pulling	Adam Harrell
Donna Hurst			George Lindbeck
Bruce Stratton			Wanda Street
Joe Trigg			Ed Damerl
			Dwayne Brown
			Mohamed Abbamin
			Devin Chinault
			Lara Traylor
			Charles Feiring
			Chrissy Snyder
			Chris Montera
			Michelle Ludeman
			Ray Whatley
			Steve Simon
			Dan Norville

Topic/Subject	Discussion	Recommendations, Action/Follow-up; Responsible Person
I. Call to order – Kevin Dillard, Chair	Kevin called the meeting to order. He thanked Bruce Stratton, Joe Trigg, and JC Bolling for their work with the FARC rotation project.	No further action is required
II. Approval of Minutes i. November 2022 ii. December 2022	The November 17, 2022, minutes and the December 1, 2022, minutes were approved as submitted.	No further action is required.
III. OEMS Report i. Grants Division Report	Due to supply chain issues, we received 15 requests for grant extensions. All of these were approved. We had 3 grant modifications that were requested and approved. As of today, we haven't received any special grant applications. However, at the direction of the Committee at our last meeting - specifically with Wise Rescue Squad, they will be submitting their special initiative grant either this week or next week. We will then move forward with their new ambulance purchase. The grants unit processed a total of 32 payments year to date. We've	No further action is required.

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	<p>had 2 requests for emergency grants. They were reviewed and declined funding because they didn't meet the established criteria of either a man-made or natural disaster. Both grants had compelling reasons why they needed this emergency grant. It comes down to people not being able to get parts. They are unable to get timely results if they make orders and so it puts organizations in a bind with regards to being able to provide services. Mr. Berg met with the Executive Management and the Chair of FARC on several occasions to address how to help these agencies that don't fall into the emergency grant mode. OEMS has decided to purchase 2 new ambulances. They have already been ordered. One has already come off the production line. Another one is almost ready to come off the production line. They will belong to OEMS. The intent is that when organizations or agencies have events that don't fall into the emergency grant mode, we will be able to loan one of these vehicles to them. A lot of details still need to be worked out. This includes the paperwork, lettering, insurance, and permitting of the loaned vehicle. Kevin asked what agencies would be eligible for this. Mike said we haven't made a final decision on that. Mike was asked what manufacturer we procured these through? Mike said Braun.</p>	
<p>I. Grant Manager Position</p>	<p>Kevin congratulated Mike Berg for officially being appointed as the Grants Division Manager and welcomed him on board.</p>	<p>No further action is required.</p>
<p>II. RSAF Workshop - Southwest VA</p>	<p>Mike conducted an RSAF workshop last week in Abingdon (Southwest Virginia) at the Center for a Higher Education. There were a lot of questions and good interactions. Mike feels the attendees that were there came back with a greater appreciation of the process as well as how to improve their opportunities when applying for grants. Mr. Berg met with the Regional Directors group yesterday and offered to do additional workshops. He is scheduled to do a workshop on August 9, 2023, for the Peninsula's region.</p>	<p>No further action is required.</p>
<p>III. Fall 2022 Grant Cycle</p>	<p>The RSAF Fall Cycle paperwork and recommended awards was sent to the Commissioner of Health in December. Everything was signed and the awards posted on our website on January 1, 2023, as planned. The grants unit received feedback from a few individuals and organizations. They wanted to know why their grants weren't funded and what could they do to improve their chances of getting funded in the future. The grants unit provided grades and comments to these individuals and organizations. Most of the grants were well written and had good grades. The bottom line is that we simply ran out of money. They were encouraged to re-apply in the next grant cycle.</p>	<p>No further action is required.</p>
<p>IV. Spring 2023 Grant Cycle</p>	<p>The Spring 2023 grant cycle opened yesterday. As of today, we don't have any completed grants. We do have 4 incomplete grants started - 3 EMS agencies and 1 non-licensed agency.</p>	<p>No further action is required.</p>

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<p><b>IV Unfinished Business</b></p> <p>i. Update on redesign of financial forms (3/22) - no update</p> <p>ii. Special Initiative Wording (3/22)</p> <p>I. Local government attestation</p> <p>iii. Regional Tour - moved to March time frame.</p> <p>iv. Special Initiative - IV Pumps</p> <p>v. FARC membership rotation workgroup</p>	<p>Mike said we are finding some things in the current E-GIFT program that need to be updated as well. We have a group meeting next Monday to start working on some of the things that have been lingering that need to be addressed. The redesign of financial forms is one of the things that will be addressed at that meeting. Mike hopes to have something done on this by the fall cycle. Adam said he was confident we would have at least portions of the changes adjusted by the fall cycle.</p> <p>At our last meeting, we had the discussion regarding having the administrator of the county, or the manager, or executive of the local government signing off on grant requests by agencies that provide services for those jurisdictions. It was decided that staff would work on some language regarding this. Mike said he has been working on this and had provided staff leadership with some suggested language. Once the General Assembly is over, we will be working with our Attorney General liaison to make sure the language is appropriate and then bring that back to this group.</p> <p>Kevin said the last time we talked about the Regional Tour, we had hoped to select a date in the first quarter of the year and potentially do the tour in the second quarter of the year. Adam said we're still on track for that. The issue we have run into right now, of course, is the General Assembly is now in session. Kevin said it looks like it's going to happen.</p> <p>Mike shared he met with leadership and our finance department to talk about the IV pump project. He will meet with the Virginia Ambulance Association this afternoon to solicit from them, hopefully through the survey of their members and other commercial vendors, as to the type and number of pumps that they may need. In the meantime, our financial side will be working with various vendors. We have a couple of vendors that routinely call us asking when we're making the decision. The things to consider are the type of pumps, what's required as far as biomed and preventative maintenance, the supplies, the availability of those supplies, etc. Mike is hoping we're able to bring this back together and have information to move forward with the purchase before our next meeting. Kevin thanked Donna for bringing this initiative up and said it's still moving along.</p> <p>JC said the FARC membership rotation workgroup met the first week of January and reviewed some of the hiccups in the current way we do business. We had decided to administratively handle this instead of legislatively. Bruce developed a chart to correct this rotation problem and each member was given a copy of the handout. Kevin and JC were extended a year on FARC to balance those going off FARC and those coming on FARC. JC and Joe met with the Regional Directors group and talked about representation replacements. They clarified that if somebody leaves the committee with less than a year and a half or three grant cycles left, the Regional Council there're from has the option of appointing somebody else to fulfill the rest of the term. This will assure there's equal</p>	<p>No further action is required.</p> <p>No further action is required.</p> <p>No further action is required.</p> <p>No further action is required.</p> <p>No further action is required.</p>

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<p>vi. Regional Council Grant review sessions</p>	<p>representation and equal lengths of time. If the Regional Council involved decides not to replace the vacated position, then we will go to the next council in rotation. The person appointed to finish the partial term of the council region that was vacated will not have the partial term count as a term toward the next council representation that comes on board. By doing this, it may create a longer time for that member on FARC but if we don't look at this and the process of maintaining hard dates, we could be right back in the same position we find ourselves in now. The Regional Directors were appreciative of the fact that we came back to talk to them about this. They also asked that we add the Regional Council appointments that are coming up. This will allow the councils time to plan and think about their next appointments on FARC. Mike said that for clarification purposes, the Administration has extended the membership or appointment for members of the Governor's Advisory Board. That was the cue we used to be able to extend the membership's times for the FARC meeting. Lord Fairfax EMS Council (LFEMSC) and Old Dominion EMS Alliance (ODEMSA) are the next two Regional Councils in rotation for FARC. We have received the nominations from ODEMSA and Lord Fairfax is currently working on their nominations.</p> <p>Mike explained, that in times past, the Regional Councils would meet with the RSAF grantee applicants in their area and go over the grants they were submitting. This was part of their grading and review process. There were several organizations who had reached out to the Deputy Health Commissioner and the Executive Advisor directly with regards to questions and concerns about the grant process. There was an agency that contacted their legislator who in turn contacted OEMS. As a result of this, there was discussion about the need for consistency among the regional councils in the way they conducted their review process. The Office was asked to stop that process. Adam said the issue we had, and the one that was specifically brought up to the Deputy Health Commissioner and taken to a Legislator, is we have a specific region where a member of the FARC participated at the regional review as well as grading on the FARC. The complaint was that the grants in that region, where the FARC member participated on the region reviews, had an unfair advantage, and potentially received information outside of the application. Therefore, at the request of the Commissioner's Office, we were asked to document and provide an overview documentation on the entire grading process. Out of that came the unbiased seventh grade that occurs now. It is based on hard statistics. We were told if we could not come up with a unified direction for the regional councils to perform those meeting and provide that input and meet with FARC, it needed to stop. There was discussion among the FARC about directing staff to re-visit this. One of the Regional Council directors stated that this issue came up in their meeting in November 2022, and there was wide disagreement on having the councils review it like they used to. Some directors like it the way it is now while others liked it the way it was in the past. There was no unanimous decision either way.</p>	<p>No further action is required.</p>

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vii. Other	<p>Mike said we are working with 2 agencies to reclaim RSAF granted items. One of the agencies is closing their doors in April. There is friction between the agency and the local government. We are working with the agency to determine their plans with the ambulance, stretcher and the mounting system that was awarded to them but is still within the five-year time frame. We are working with another agency that has several pieces of equipment that were granted to them and is still within the five-year time frame. This agency did not have their agency license renewed last April. Last week, the Board of Supervisors for the jurisdiction replaced every officer in that organization. The new administration is presenting their plan to the Board of Supervisors on Monday evening. They will be meeting with the county's agency licensure so they can start providing service again.</p> <p>At our last meeting, Mike was looking for thoughts and ideas concerning organizations that are not licensed EMS agencies that are part of an overall jurisdictional agency applying for grants. We had one example last cycle where an organization applied for an ambulance. They are not a licensed EMS agency, but they are part of the overall jurisdictional public safety. Because they aren't a licensed EMS agency, there was no data in the vehicle section. The reviewers weren't sure where the vehicle was going, who the vehicle was going to be titled to and who would the permit be issued to? Mike asked since this situation seems to be occurring more frequently, is there additional information that we need to require of these folks? The consensus of the committee was that if an agency is practicing under the umbrella of a licensed EMS agency, the grant should be written by the parent/licensed EMS agency to avoid confusion. When the non-EMS agency puts a grant in for an ambulance, it skews the whole grant and doesn't accurately show the entire picture. We require multi-agency requests to show the financials for all agencies involved. We could do the same in this situation. Several members of FARC said the grant in question was confusing and they felt they didn't have an honest picture of what was going on. Adam said we could do a 30-minute video where we go over this. We could also start asking questions on the application like the vehicle you are requesting, are you going to be the registered owner? Who is this going to be licensed to? Who else may be using it? We could make this a mandatory field where they would have to select that box and answer those questions. Incorporating these types of elements into the grant process may be beneficial. We try to give everyone the benefit of the doubt. At the end of the day, we're trying to look out for the best interests of that jurisdiction. We're not getting any more money but we're getting more requests. The cost of everything has risen so the money isn't going as far. We must find better ways to get the information we need to help us make better decisions.</p> <p>Kevin reminded the committee that in February 2020, Rich Troshak did a presentation on Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD). As a group, FARC had set a goal of 100 percent compliance. It looks like we have seven jurisdictions that have not moved forward with it. They are Allegheny, Bath, Cumberland, Floyd, Giles, Highland, and Southampton. Gary said</p>	<p>No further action is required.</p> <p>No further action is required.</p> <p>No further action is required</p>

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	he is working with Giles County and Floyd County to submit grants for this coming March. By law, everyone will have to meet this requirement by July 1, 2024.	
V. New Business	Adam said he had a couple of items for some projects we have going on that may be of interest to FARC. We had two jurisdictions, Grayson County and Tazewell County, from Southwest Virginia reach out to us while they were in town for legislative events. Both jurisdictions had questions relative to some of the struggles they are having with recruitment and retention, finances, keeping agencies afloat, etc. We met with them both last week and tried to help them identify areas that we have seen in other communities. One of the biggest areas of discussion with them related to trying to establish more career positions within their jurisdiction and how volunteers perceive that. We're looking at a couple of different potential opportunities to pilot in that area. We did take this opportunity with both jurisdictions to review the Rescue Squad Assistance Fund Program. We went over the special priorities, the definitions associated with emergency grants and special projects. One of the areas of focus with Tazewell County surrounded their documentation and the bill for service rate of return. We're looking at working with them on a pilot project to do a study on that area. It will include EMS-focus around management and administration of EMS in a rural county. We are going to have Page Wolfberg & Wirth come in and they're going to do a pre-assessment in Tazewell. They're going to look at their current billing rates, their current billing practices, their payer mix, their collection rates, what it costs that county to run a truck at different times of the day, different geographic locations, etc. We've also contracted with VCU to do a study. It is going to be regional based. The study will be performed identically in all 11 regional councils. There will be between eight and ten EMS agencies that include volunteer, mixed, Fire, Governmental, for-profits, private services, hospital-based, and Air Medical. They're going to work with those agencies to gather information on their operations. They will calculate the cost of service, the cost of a provider, and what it takes to provide EMS for their jurisdiction. We're going to use that as a gauge to see what EMS is costing the Commonwealth of Virginia all across the State. VCU estimates it will take them 18 months to complete that study.	Adam will bring back to FARC the results of the studies when completed.
VI. Public Comment	No public comment	No further action is required.
VII. Next Meeting	Our next meeting will be May 4, 2023, at 10:00 am at the Embassy Suites in Richmond.	No further action is required.
VIII. Adjournment	Meeting adjourned 11:50.	No further action is required.