

**CENTRAL LANE AMBULANCE TRANSPORT SYSTEM
JOINT ELECTED OFFICIALS TASK FORCE**

Meeting Summary

May 28, 2009

**Eugene Emergency Services Training Center – 1705 W 2nd Avenue
12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

Elected Officials Present:

Lane County Commissioner Rob Handy

Eugene City Councilors Mike Clark, Andrea Ortiz and George Brown

Springfield City Councilors Dave Ralston and Hillary Wylie

Lane Rural Fire/Rescue Board President Larry von Moos and Director Kevin King

Eugene Staff Present:

Randy Groves, Denise Giard, Joe Zaludek, Larry Hill, Julie Lindsey, Glen Potter, Joann Eppli

IAFF Local 851 Representatives Present:

Scott Olmos

Springfield Staff Present:

Dennis Murphy, Brian Evanoff, Bart Noll

Lane Rural Staff Present:

Dale Borland, Bill Bass, Chris Heppel

LCOG Staff Present:

Byron Vanderpool and Paula Taylor

1. Welcome

- Dennis Murphy convened the fourth meeting of the Ambulance Transport System (ATS) Joint Elected Officials (JEO) Task Force. He stated that starting with today's meeting, the ATS JEO Task Force meetings will follow public meetings law, and he completed a roll call of the elected officials. He then announced Springfield City Councilor Hillary Wylie will be replacing Springfield City Councilor John Woodrow. He added that both Councilor Wylie and Randy Groves will arrive at today's meeting a few minutes late.
- Everyone present introduced themselves.

2. Future ATS JEO Task Force Meetings

- The Task Force scheduled the following three meetings:
 - Monday, June 8, 2009 from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.;
 - Monday, June 29, 2009 from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.; and
 - Monday, September 14, 2009 from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- Councilor Andrea Ortiz said she will not be able to attend the June 8th meeting.

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- The Task Force decided that there will not be any ATS JEO Task Force meetings in July and August; however, staff will continue to work on this project during the recess.

3. Information Share

- Councilor Andrea Ortiz stated that after hearing that Lane Rural and Springfield both receive some General Fund support, she asked the City Manager to study what it would look like to bring Eugene's ambulance service into the General Fund. She received full support for this motion from the Budget Committee members who were present at the meeting. Randy Groves clarified that Councilor Ortiz's motion was not to fund the whole ambulance system out of the General Fund with the fire department passing revenue back into the General Fund. Councilor Ortiz confirmed and said it is her understanding that the ATF is a stand-alone Enterprise Fund, and she wants to make sure the funding for ambulance service is stable. Randy Groves added that he and his staff were asked by Councilor Ortiz to identify what is being funded out of the ATF that is not specifically tied to transports.
- Councilor Mike Clark added that he believes ambulance service is a core service, and stated that the intention of Councilor Ortiz's motion is to separate the portions that are non-gurney side related and look at this as a core service for the long-term.
- Councilor Dave Ralston clarified that Springfield has specifically authorized General Fund support for this year only, just to fill the gap, and have not decided on General Fund support as a permanent decision. Councilor Hillary Wylie agreed with Councilor Ralston.

4. Meeting Summary Approval

- The Task Force approved the May 11, 2009 Meeting Summary.

5. Register Guard Op-Ed Article

- Randy Groves reminded Task Force members that the Op-Ed Article is the first formal step to help educate the public on the issues being addressed by the ATS Task Force. He said the Task Force still needs to establish dates for the series of public information forums.
- The Task Force approved the Op-Ed Article for publication, with the exception of Councilor Hillary Wylie, who said she will review and approve it electronically as soon as possible. Later in the meeting, Dennis Murphy announced that Councilor Hillary Wylie reviewed and approved the Op-Ed Article for publication.
- Randy Groves noted it will be important to release the Op-Ed Article at the most optimal time (e.g., publication in Sunday's paper), to capture the largest potential audience.
- Councilor Hillary Wylie reported that she received a complaint from a community member who is low-income that received a \$1,600 ambulance transport bill. She said one of her concerns is that the public understands how the system works, including the breakdown of Medicare, Medicaid and FireMed. Randy Groves explained that there will be a number of communications out to the public, and a larger JEO meeting to present the

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Task Force's recommendations. He said there will be more media attention surrounding the public information forums.

6. ATS JEO Task Force Work Plan / Update Reports on Potential Solutions

- Randy Groves referred to the Task Force Work Plan handout. He said the Work Plan will be used as a tool to keep the Task Force on track, and guide us into decision points.
- Dennis Murphy noted that the Issue Statement and the Task Force Goal are the same as those already approved, and that Task Force Objectives have been added. He explained the potential solutions have been prioritized by short-term, intermediate and long-term, with the overall goal to show the full JEO group what the Task Force is looking at now and in to the future. The Action Plan is shown in a matrix format to acknowledge the value of joint decision-making, as well as jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction autonomy.
- Paula Taylor (LCOG) reported that LCOG is scheduled to present the results of their study on Creating an Ambulance Service Taxing District to the LFDB at their June meeting. Byron Vanderpool stated that LCOG will, in turn, present the information to the ATS JEO Task Force in September.
- Councilor Dave Ralston asked that Task Force Objective number five be revised to show the date when the Task Force will report back to full JEO group. He believes it is important to have something in there that tells when the Task Force plans to come to solution.
- Councilor Mike Clark asked if it is appropriate to vote off a potential solution, to which both Dennis Murphy and Randy Groves replied yes. Councilor Clark then made a motion to eliminate the option to Adjust Response Times (longer response times). Commissioner Rob Handy asked that legislative format be used to show that the option has been rejected by the Task Force. Randy Groves asked all Task Force members in favor of eliminating the option to Adjust Response Times to vote. He then asked all Task Force members who oppose eliminating the option to Adjust Response Times to vote. The vote passed unanimously.
- District Board Director Kevin King asked if the Task Force Goal statement assumption is that service levels will not be reduced. He said the Lane Rural Board wants to maintain current service levels.
- Councilor Dave Ralston said that any option being considered should not reduce the quality or level of service. Councilor Mike Clark suggested changing the third sentence to show that the quality and level of service will be maintained.
- Dennis Murphy noted that the goal is to make the system financially stable, by creating stable funding so quality and service levels are not reduced. He suggested the statement specifically state that the goal is financial sustainability.
- Commissioner Rob Handy confirmed that costs will go up in order to maintain current service levels, and that it is not possible with the present funding structure to maintain current service levels and quality. Dennis Murphy added that staff will explore the options that the elected officials will decide which solutions best address the issues with the ATS.

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- The Task Force decided to amend the Task Force Goal statement to clearly state that there will not be a reduction in quality or service levels, and to add financial stability as part of the overall goal.
- Commissioner Rob Handy asked Springfield and IAFF Local 851 if they believe ambulance service is a core service, and what that might mean in the long-term. Councilor Dave Ralston replied that even though it has not been said, Springfield thinks the ambulance system being a core service is implied – it has to do with life safety. He noted that Springfield City Council found it important enough to support with General Fund money. Then speaking for himself, Councilor Ralston said he thinks ambulance service is a core service. Councilor Hillary Wylie said that councilors are held by each budget cycle, and have to decide where funds have to go. She said there is absolute commitment to this service, to seeing it continue, and to search for solutions. She added that to her right now, we are looking for solutions. Scott Olmos replied that police and fire rise to the level of core services. He said he thinks that ambulance service is a core service, should not be reduced, and is something that community members should be entitled to regardless of socioeconomic status. He is thankful he lives in a city that provides this service. He noted that in the past, the City of Eugene chose to rely on a private provider, and that was a trying time he hopes the community never has to experience again. He stated that the elected officials have the ability to make sure that does not happen.
- Referring to the option to Reconfigure ASA Boundaries, Councilor Andrea Ortiz confirmed this option is being studied, and said she would like to see this option moved up in the list of priorities. Randy Groves stated that this option is being worked on, and added that Eugene believes it is the direction to go. He said that Lane County 1 is more concerned with improved or continued quality service. He emphasized that if the dial was turned today, it would crash the system due to the reduced revenue and adverse financial impact to Eugene's system. Councilor Andrea Ortiz inquired on the process to get on the Lane County Commissioners agenda, to which Randy Groves replied we will start with contacting the Director of Health & Human Services, Rob Rockstroh. He then emphasized that replacement funding has to be identified before further reducing the existing revenue stream.
- Councilor Mike Clark asked which ORS ASA Boundary Reconfiguration falls under, to which Denise Giard replied that it was provided in the May 11th ATS JEO Task Force meeting packet. *[A key provision of ORS 682 is that it requires counties in ORS 682-062 to adopt a plan for the efficient delivery of ambulance services, including dividing the county into ambulance service areas (ASAs). Lane County's ASA Plan is codified in the Lane Code as Chapter 18...Lane Code 18.030: Lane County ASA Plan 18.030 also addresses the conditions in which existing ASA providers may request modifications of current boundaries. Existing providers must agree in writing and present their request to the Director. The Director then elicits a review and recommendation of the Committee to the merits and benefits of modifying existing boundaries.]*
- Councilor Dave Ralston asked what Reconfiguring ASA Boundaries would accomplish, and if there is a dollar amount. Randy Groves explained that it is dealing with how the

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system can evolve, and added that right now, when Eugene responds to calls in predominantly Lane County Fire District #1's response area (Elmira, Noti, Walton), it ties up resources for prolonged periods of time. He stated that Eugene is constrained with resources, so this would be more of a cost avoidance model for Eugene in that Eugene would not need to add additional expense by adding units to address the capacity issue. At the same time, Lane Rural currently has the capacity to respond to the calls in the more rural areas of Zone 3.

- Councilor Andrea Ortiz asked who covers Eugene when crews respond to calls in Walton. Chief Groves replied that in general, Springfield and Lane Rural Fire/Rescue respond to calls in our ASA if Eugene crews are not available. Councilor Ortiz asked if the union had an opinion, to which Scott Olmos replied that at the ATS Summit in January, he stated the union's position was that taxpayers of Eugene should be the highest priority in receiving service. He said when Eugene needs to respond to a call in the more rural areas, it depletes our service and becomes what he considers a safety issue. He re-stated that those who pay taxes should get the benefits. He said it is difficult and of upmost concern that there needs to be some system to provide services in that area. He noted that when there is a mass casualty incident, all departments work together to help each other. Randy Groves added that Scott Olmos is the President of IAFF Local 851, which represents both Eugene and Lane Rural firefighters. He also reminded the Task Force that the ambulance system is not currently funded by tax dollars.
- Councilor Mike Clark asked how calls for service are covered in the River Road/Santa Clara area. Randy Groves replied that this area is in Zone 2, which includes River Road and other contract districts. He said calls for service in the rural and frontier area (Zone 3) often last as long as two hours each. Councilor Clark said he would like to know how often Eugene crews serve people who do not live in Eugene. Randy Groves provided the following penetration statistics: Zone 1 = 15, 885; Zone 2 (contract districts) = 480; and Zone 3 (everything else) = 848. Councilor Clark confirmed that jurisdictions help cover other ASAs using mutual aid. Scott Olmos added that Eugene has a serious capacity and workload issue, and stated that Eugene's ambulances are at the hospital and running calls all day and night long. He stated it is also important that crews get periods of rest.
- District President Larry von Moos agreed with Scott Olmos, and added that another component is that Lane Rural has a piece of the system that is not being utilized and if implemented, will provide additional funding for Lane Rural. He said that Lane Rural and Lane County 1 are currently talking about a potential lane/district merger.
- Dennis Murphy said that Springfield has financial issues not a capacity issue, as Springfield's union President stated at the ATS Summit in January. He said Springfield will resolve their issues differently with the geographic area in east Lane County.
- Randy Groves stated that the biggest difference between now versus six years ago, is that issues are resolved openly and collaboratively, instead of in a vacuum. He said Eugene is currently looking at an ASA reconfiguration to the west, and believes this will be a viable option once the funding dilemma is solved.

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- Dennis Murphy said that Rate and Mileage Increases are potential short-term solutions for all three agencies. He added that FireMed is listed as a short-term option because it can be expanded by member year.
- Councilor Hillary Wylie said she would like to discuss a FireMed surcharge for rural areas. Dennis Murphy stated that FireMed Membership is currently offered at one price, but elected officials can change that – it is a public policy decision by jurisdiction. Councilor Wylie said it is hard to get out to the rural areas, and a surcharge may help a little bit. Dennis Murphy stated that the cost of FireMed is an example of something elected officials are in control of. He added that it belongs on the list as a short-term option.
- Dennis Murphy said that General Fund support is a viable potential for all three agencies.
- Dennis Murphy reported that no decision has been made for either Lane Rural or Springfield to Outsource Non-Emergency Calls.
- Commissioner Rob Handy stated that there is potential to Outsource Non-Emergency Calls in other places, and asked why there is not potential in Lane Rural or Springfield. Dennis Murphy replied that in Springfield, it has not been addressed at all. Councilor Andrea Ortiz noted that Springfield does not have a capacity issue. District President Larry von Moos stated that for Lane Rural, this option will reduce services and income, would not be helpful, and that the Lane Rural Board is not interested in exploring this option at this time. Denise Giard suggested making reference on the Potential Solutions matrix in the comments section regarding Springfield and Lane Rural's position on this option.
- Randy Groves added that out of the 8 ASAs in Lane County, 80% of the skilled nursing facilities are located in Eugene's ASA. He said that skilled nursing facilities account for much of the non-emergency transport business redirected to the private non-emergency transport provider. He emphasized that from this standpoint, Eugene's service area is unique to the others and warrants this different solution.
- District Board Director Kevin King stated that Lane Rural has the capacity to pick up rural calls, and can do this without a permanent reconfiguration.
- Randy Groves asked that the option to Consolidate/Merge Department Functions for Lane Rural be shown as a "potential" solution.
- Dennis Murphy stated that two of the three agencies are engaged in the option to Reconfigure ASA Boundaries (Lane Rural and Eugene).
- Councilor Dave Ralston confirmed that Eugene and Springfield, and Lane Rural and Lane County 1 are the departments that are studying the option to Consolidate/Merge Department Functions. Randy Groves added that if nothing else, everyone can learn from what other are doing.
- Dennis Murphy explained that Deployment Redesign occurs when you change where your resources are based which can positively impact response. It can vary in how and what it looks like. People and equipment are shifted to provide the best level of service regardless of jurisdiction. He said that Springfield does not currently have an alternative strategy listed, and that redeployment between Eugene and Springfield is always a potential. He made reference to the 3-Battalion system. Dennis added that this is a place

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saver, as there is no proposal out for a Deployment Redesign, and said that the Task Force needs to decide whether this option remains on the list or is rejected.

- Commissioner Rob Handy asked why Deployment Redesign is listed under intermediate and not under long-term solutions. Dennis Murphy replied that he believed it was best to list it under intermediate solutions, and it could be suggested to the unions to include Deployment Redesign in labor negotiations. Denise Giard added that Deployment Redesign comes into play as other things happened. For example, looking at if resources are in the best place. Councilor Dave Ralston confirmed that Deployment Redesign is part of what is already being done (e.g., moving fire stations, etc.). Randy Groves added that Deployment Redesign is ongoing. District President Larry von Moos said that if the ASA reconfiguration is implemented, redeployment of units out west will be shown as a short-term option in progress.
- Commissioner Rob Handy inquired on the union's opinion on the option to Consolidate/Merge Department Functions. Scott Olmos replied that the union supports creating a fire district, fire authority and inter-agency efficiencies, because it supports the community better. For example, consolidating/merging Eugene and Springfield's Training Sections could reduce duplicate efforts, downsize training staff and would be much more efficient. He said Eugene and Springfield's Fire Prevention Section/Fire Marshal's Office and the Logistics Section could also benefit from consolidating and merging functions. Randy Groves added that this model takes both departments further in being able to do more by eliminating the redundancies. This option is waiting for results of the ESCI study. He noted that everything starts with street level-care, and creating the perception that there is one system on the street. Both departments use the closest most appropriate resource for response. Randy Groves said that how to improve effectiveness of support and administrative functions are also being looked at. Dennis Murphy stated that he and Randy Groves have a pre-draft meeting with ESCI next week. He noted that the model for the Eugene/Springfield merger is data driven. Next steps for the ESCI study will be to take the information out to stakeholders (elected officials, labor unions, etc.).
- Randy Groves stated that there is a great deal of interest at the state level on the Eugene/Springfield ESCI study, as well as what the Task Force is doing because of the unique approach of working to solve the issues regionally, and that two well-established departments are looking at how to work more efficiently. He again noted that there were representatives from the State of Oregon at and watching the ATS Summit in January.
- Dennis Murphy said that the option to Create a Fire District has potential, and makes sense for Eugene and Springfield. He said a district would contribute differently, and a single governing body would be created – a Fire Authority.
- Councilor Mike Clark asked Randy Groves if Eugene would be its own district, and suggested adding Fire Authority under Fire District, because it would need to be managed according to each jurisdiction's budget. Councilor Dave Ralston said that he would be more supportive if a fire district was created for Lane County. He said our taxpayers are paying, and they expect service and support.

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- Randy Groves clarified that one of the outcomes of the ESCI study could be Creating a Eugene/Springfield Fire District. Dennis Murphy added that Creating a Fire District is a sub-set of a merger. Councilor Hillary Wiley stated that changes could be incremental, and as efficiency and unity starts working, other pieces could be added. Randy Groves explained that with the 3-Battalion system Eugene and Springfield now operate under a fully-integrated response order, automatic move-ups and Metro Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
- Dennis Murphy stated that the option to Create a Taxing District takes time.
- Regarding the Mobile Health Services (MHS) option, Dennis Murphy said he does not have a lot of information, but will distribute an Agenda Item Summary with attachments that includes some information. He said he believes this option has potential.
- Councilor Mike Clark said this may be a question for Brenda Wilson, the City's Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) Manager, and asked if there are any bills at the legislature, as the issues with the ATS are statewide. Denise Giard replied that there are ongoing lobbying efforts through OMAP. Dennis Murphy added that the American Ambulance Association (AAA) participates in lobbying efforts on Medicare reform to increase Medicare reimbursements. Additionally, Randy Groves said that there have been ongoing lobbying efforts through consortiums since the Medicare Extension Act. He reported that he and other Fire Chiefs are constantly asked to write letters of support for lobbying efforts. He stated that this might be something to coordinate through the IGR. Councilor Clark noted that today is the deadline for submitting bills to the legislature. Councilor Andrea Ortiz confirmed that a bill for the Oregon Health Plan would be an example of a bill that would have a direct impact to the City. Randy Groves stated that Brenda Wilson is very aware of the situation with the ATS, and department staff make sure she is kept up-to-date on the information. Councilor Clark noted that elected officials can talk to other elected officials also. Denise Giard said that the state is experiencing budget funding issues too. Dennis Murphy suggested showing "N/A" on the Potential Solutions matrix until applicable bills are identified.
- Councilor Hillary Wylie said she would like to work to develop a bill and get support for the next session to add a fee of \$15 to \$20 to auto insurance to fund ambulance service.
- District President Larry von Moos briefly explained the model for a Hazardous Materials (HazMat) loading fee that he helped lobby for industry-wide support and helped implement.
- Randy Groves emphasized that we need to do something (e.g., and Ambulance Service Taxing District), and the options are out there. He said the broader the options get, the more we will need to start pulling in other strategic partners. Councilor Andrea Ortiz commented that it would not be unlike Eugene to lead the way. Councilor Mike Clark noted that there is room at the legislative level to have non-traditional support.
- Commissioner Rob Handy said that the Task Force could develop something for the next session, and then asked Larry Hill to share his perspective. Larry Hill stated that he is unsure how the fees would be levied. Denise Giard added that a number of attempts have been made by other jurisdictions. She said in the past, when fees have been imposed there has always been broader competition from the hospitals to take a piece of the pie.

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She stated that there used to be a fund to apply to for non-insured motorists, but now that has disappeared. Larry Hill said it seems there is going to be action for national broader coverage for more people. He said we are probably not going to solve this at the state level. He added that this is one piece, and the state is not in a position to even fund the Oregon Health Plan. He suggested the Task Force look to local solutions before looking for state solutions, and hope the Federal Government comes through in the next two or three years.

- Speaking from a political level, Councilor Mike Clark said it different to represent constituents in emergency response than healthcare, as healthcare is a broader topic that is treated differently at the thirty thousand foot level.
- Councilor Hillary Wylie asked that the word “state” be added to the Lobbying Efforts option on the Potential Solutions matrix.
- Randy Groves reported that Eugene’s proposed rate increase is currently being reviewed by the City Attorney. He added that there are no other short-term options for Eugene to implement that will buy the department some time while other solutions that provide more stable funding are being researched.
- Dennis Murphy reported that Springfield is closing in on 90 days post-implementation since their rate increase, and noted that the rate increase is not a total solution to the problem.
- Dennis Murphy distributed the Agenda Item Summary with attachments that included information on Mobile Health Services (MHS). He said that Jo Eppli has electronic copies of this information. He asked Task Force members to review the information and prepare to take action at the next Task Force meeting by voting “yes” or “no” to applying for a grant. If approved, he will develop a proposal and a detailed business plan. Referring to the attachments, he said the first paragraph covers the financial impact and solutions to challenges of stabilizing system quality and service levels. He said the next paragraph covers system capacity and shows the potential to lower pre-hospital costs, meeting goals of healthcare reform. Dennis then referred to the article from Fire Chief Magazine, stating that it explains how calls would flow through the system. He said MHS would combine things that already exist, with funding from the Federal Government. He said there would be long-term reimbursable benefits to providers that do not exist today.
- Councilor Mike Clark asked if there would be a revenue stream from the hospitals with MHS, to which Dennis Murphy replied yes, Peace Health has expressed interest.
- Councilor Andrea Ortiz confirmed that a MHS system will not differentiate between people who have insurance and people who do not have insurance. Dennis Murphy added that the system will provide improved care at lower costs. Councilor Ortiz clarified that not everyone needs insurance under an MHS system.
- Councilor Hillary Wylie mentioned that CAHOOTS provides an important service to the community. Dennis Murphy re-stated that MHS will add-in components that already exist.
- Commissioner Rob Handy asked staff to confirm that this grant application would be unique to Lane County, and that no similar grant applications are already in the works.

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7. JEO Meetings

- Randy Groves said that the Fire Chiefs will provide a brief update on the Task Force's Work Plan to the full JEO group next Monday, June 1st. He said he was asked by the City Manager to make sure something was ready to present to the JEO for this meeting. There was a group discussion, and the Task Force decided that copies of the updated Work Plan will be distributed to the full JEO group. Commissioner Rob Handy asked if it could be sent ahead of time. Councilor Mike Clark suggested including copies of the Register Guard Op-Ed Article in the information packet for the JEO meeting. Other items on the June 1st JEO meeting agenda are: an update on economic development; and the Metro Plan.
- Randy Groves reported that the Task Force is tentative scheduled to present recommendations to the full JEO group at a special session on July 21, 2009 from 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Springfield Library Meeting Room.

8. Additional Issues

- District President Larry von Moos reiterated that the Task Force still needs to set dates for the series of public information forums.
- No one brought forward any additional issues to discuss.
- The meeting was adjourned.

(Recorded by Joann Eppli)