

**Financial Assistance Review Committee (FARC)  
Quarterly Meeting  
Embassy Suites - Richmond  
Glen Allen, Virginia  
February 7, 2019  
1:00 PM**

Members Present:	Members Absent:	Administration Staff:	Staff/Other Guests:
Kevin Dillard, Chairman		Luke Parker	Karen Owens
JC Bolling		Linwood Pulling	Sam Burnette
Donna Hurst			Rich Troshak
Curtis Sheets			George Lindbeck
Bruce Stratton			
Joe Trigg			

Topic/Subject	Discussion	Recommendations, Action/Follow-up; Responsible Person
I. Call to order - Kevin Dillard, Chairman	Kevin welcomed everyone to the FARC Quarterly meeting. There were no minutes to approve because we approved them at the December awards meeting.	No further action is required
II. FARC Chair Report	Kevin thanked JC Bolling, Greg Woods and the staff at Southwest Virginia EMS Council for a great job of coordinating the FARC tour we did in Southwest Virginia in December. We not only had our December 2018 awards meeting there but were able to visit several EMS agencies in the area. We believe it was beneficial to all that were able to go. Kevin also thanked the FARC members for their dedication and time spent in grading the December 2018 grants. Luke said it was remarkable how the tour was crafted by Greg Woods and the Southwest VA EMS Council staff. It was much more than just visiting the agencies. The geography, landscape and the mountainous terrain gave us a new perspective about what it means to be EMS in Southwest Virginia. One of Kevin's goals as the Chair of FARC is to improve the communication with everyone we interact with on the grading of the grants. It's important for everyone to understand the grading process which includes how we grade and what we look at when determining the grades. Kevin stated that we were meeting with the Regional Council Directors after this meeting and encouraged everyone that could attend to join us. We had promised the Regional Council Directors at our Bristol meeting in December that we would do a more formal presentation about how we grade and how we look at things the way we do and give them the opportunity to ask questions. Luke has put together a PowerPoint presentation for the Regional Council Directors to help explain this process.	No further action is required

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III. Grants Unit Report	<p>This information can be found in the OEMS Quarterly Report to the State EMS Advisory Board dated Friday, February 8, 2019. The Fall 2018 RSAF grant deadline was September 19, 2018. OEMS received 105 grant applications requesting \$14,033,754.32. Grants were awarded on January 1, 2019 in the amount of \$4,193,864.80 to 70 agencies. The following agency categories were awarded funding for this grant cycle; 61 EMS Agencies were awarded \$4,049,206.00 and 9 Non-EMS Agencies were awarded \$144,658.80. The following EMS regional areas were awarded funding in the following amounts: Blue Ridge EMS Council – awarded \$125,355.71; Central Shenandoah EMS Council – awarded \$106,787.00; Lord Fairfax EMS Council – awarded \$226,672.21; Northern VA EMS Council – awarded \$50,243.79; Old Dominion EMS Alliance – awarded \$1,215,543.79; Peninsulas EMS Council – awarded \$281,206.29; Rappahannock EMS Council – awarded \$158,365.56; Southwest Virginia EMS Council – awarded \$632,805.88; Thomas Jefferson EMS Council – awarded \$565,916.91; Tidewater EMS Council – awarded \$374,800.29 and Western Virginia EMS Council – awarded \$456,212.60. Note: Audio Visual/Computer Hardware - \$90,342.73 - Includes projectors, computer hardware/software, toughbooks, and other audio visual equipment. Emergency Operations - \$44,433.70 - Includes items such as Mass Casualty Incident (MCI), extrication equipment, rescue boat and personal protection equipment (PPE). The Emergency Operations category also includes any other equipment or items needed in order to rapidly mobilize and dispatch help in emergency situations. Equipment - Basic and Advanced Life Support Equipment - \$1,464,409.85 - Includes any medical care equipment for sustaining life, airway management, and supplies including 12-Lead Defibrillators. Training - \$23,815.98 - Includes all training courses and training equipment such as manikins, simulators, skill-trainers and any other equipment or courses needed to teach EMS practices. Vehicles - \$2,322,884.68 - Includes ambulances, re-chassis, Quick Response Vehicles (QRV) and specialty vehicles. Recruitment &amp; Retention - \$11,731.30.</p>	No further action is required
IV OEMS Program Specialists' Report	<p>This section covers FARC's grades and comments. Luke did an analysis and looked at how many words were in each reviewers comments. The average was between 15 and 20 words per comment. Eight percent of FARC's comments were 1-12 words and eighty percent were less than eight words. FARC had previously been instructed to limit their words to a minimum - ex. Request Justified. When an agency is inquiring about why their grant was not funded and they are wanting a copy of the graders comments, they contact the grants unit. We will make a copy of the graders comments. Two or three words do not give the agency a lot to go on will not justify why their grant was not funded. They don't understand how the comment will state the request is justified but they are given a grade of 3, 4 or 5. They are looking to improve their grant and chances of being funded the next grant cycle. Luke is encouraging FARC to justify their grades and to explain why/why not, a grant was/was not funded. Even a grade of 1 should have a good justification as to why they were successful in obtaining the grant. Luke made copies for FARC of a publication put out by the University of Washington titled "Guidelines For Small Grants Review Committee". In this article, Luke highlighted and talked about 6 major points. 1) Overall Impact and Summary, 2)</p>	No further action is required

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	Significance, 3) Investigators, 4) Innovation, 5) Approach and 6) Budget. Hopefully, this report will give all of us insight on how better to grade and comment on grants.	
<p>V. RSAF Updates</p> <p>1) Adam Discussion</p> <p>2) Emergency Ops Unit</p>	<p>Adam Harrell, OEMS Business Manager, was supposed to come and talk to us about some things. Luke said he would find out what Adam was going to talk about and update FARC at a later date.</p> <p>We invited the Emergency Ops Division to talk to us about the items they are tasked with grading and what they are looking for. We wanted to know how they obtain the grade they do. Karen Owens, Emergency Ops, Manager, Sam Burnette, Assistant Emergency Ops Manager and Rich Troshak, Emergency Operations Specialist, were present. Sam spoke to us about some of the grants he was tasked with grading this past cycle. One example was an Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) grant. They were asking for 100% funding. Sam stated he is not in favor of 100% funding for grants. There should be some “buy in” from the grant applicants. This grant will not only be used for EMS but also fire and law enforcement. He looked at the grant to see what the EMS share/portion of the grant would be. In previous grant cycles, there were similar grants. One jurisdiction had received funding at the 80/20 funding level. Another jurisdiction put in for the same grant with the same products but received funding at the 50/50 funding level. What made the difference between the funding levels? Probably because they were financial needs based. Was it how the grant was written? How do we give them what they are asking for or need and still be consistent across the board? We all agreed, there should be some kind of standard when grading grants that are similar. Rich spoke next. He has worked with the 911 Centers and the EMD program for over 20 years and brought a different point of view to us. Although EMD can be used by EMS, Fire and Law Enforcement, most jurisdictions only use it for EMS. Rich said it’s not so much about whether the EMD is for EMS, Fire or Law Enforcement. It’s more about how do we get the 911 Centers and the communities to adopt EMD voluntarily so we can have a better standard of care in the Commonwealth. When it comes to grading the grants, Curtis stated that there are many layers to an onion. The financial condition of the applicant weighs heavily on FARC’s grades. That would be one of the determining factors whether an applicant gets funded at the 80/20 funding level versus the 50/50 funding level. Karen said that the way the grantees select the items and what categories they put them in can determine whether the Emergency Ops unit is assigned to grade them. These categories now include power load systems, cots, AED’s, extrication equipment, quick response vehicles, turnout gear, ballistic equipment, EMD and a host of other items. It would take a major IT overhaul to reclassify these items. OEMS just doesn’t have the time or resources to do it. Karen feels that RSAF isn’t the proper grant to be asking for turnout gear (for example) but she grades and comments on them for us. We are now getting requests for ballistic protective equipment. So far, this has not been funded. The question came up as to why? Most of the requests just state they need or want it but there isn’t a good justification for why. The discussion with the</p>	<p>No further action is required</p> <p>No further action is required</p>

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3) VDH Scoring Criteria	<p>Emergency Ops unit was good and opened our understanding on what they are looking for in an application and why they grade as they do.</p> <p>Luke went over the VDH/OEMS score and how it is calculated. This information is found on our website.</p> <p>Grade recommended by VDH criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Grade calculated by Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA)</li> <li>b. Grade calculated by Medical Underserved Area/Population (MUA/P)</li> <li>c. Grade calculated by Fiscal Stress Index (FSI)</li> <li>d. Grade calculated by Return to Localities (RLF)</li> </ul>	No further action is required
4) OEMS Price List	<p>Luke updated the OEMS pricing list for the RSAF grants. This had not been updated in several years. To obtain the pricing, Luke looked at the last 3 years of awarded grants and the average price for those awarded items. He also went to vendor's websites. He looked at the State of Ohio's ambulance contract. Basically, he did a lot of research to come up the 2019 price list. OEMS will keep a list of the averages for equipment costs and will publish this for the potential applicants.</p>	No further action is required
5) Webinar	<p>The grants unit will begin conducting technical assistance webinars each grant cycle. This will be after the grant cycle opens and before the grant cycle closes. The object of the webinars is to help answer any questions the grantees may have. This would include what is eligible and what is not eligible for funding. We will go over the application with them and hopefully make the grant process better for them. We have a webinar scheduled on March 1, 2019. Luke invited the FARC members to join us. We will allow them time at the end of the webinar to answer any questions the grantees may have for them. We feel this will not only benefit the applicants and help them write a better grant but also FARC by letting the grantees know what they are looking for when grading their grant.</p>	No further action is required
6) Defect Tracker	<p>Luke now has access to the Defect Tracker system in E-GIFT. If FARC is having problems in E-GIFT, Luke can put in a defect tracker and send this to our IT support. They can immediately begin looking at the problem and find a solution for us. This will speed up the process considerably.</p>	No further action is required
VI. Review Process Presentation for Regional Councils	<p>We had received a lot of questions from the Regional Councils. They wanted to know if their grades really mattered to FARC? In the big scheme of things, how does FARC look at their grades and comments? How do they look at the grades and comments from all the reviewers as a whole? How does FARC come up with their final grades and determine who gets recommended for funding and who does not get recommended for funding? Luke had prepared a presentation</p>	We will meet with the Regional Councils at the conclusion of our meeting.

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	<p>for our meeting with the Regional Councils. He went over this with FARC before we met with the Regional Councils. Part of the presentation was about the review criteria that the RSAF reviewers look for in the grant applications. The process in a nutshell is FARC reviews applications from a natural perspective for the entire state. The Regional Councils grades and comments show their perspective for the agencies in their regional area. Subjectivity is absolutely necessary so FARC can make objective decisions. The ideal application will have the following: 1) a priority for the region 2) it is a sustainable project 3) it is compliant with the code 4) it involves best practices. That becomes an award. These tie directly with our grades. The Regional Councils define what their regional priorities are. The Program Reps can tell us whether or not a request is sustainable. The Committees tell us whether or not a request is compliant with the Code. Our staff tells us if this is best practices.</p>	
<p><b>VII. Reminder of Important Dates</b></p>	<p>RSAF webinar is to be held on March 1, 2019. Luke is doing a grant workshop in Fredericksburg on February 21, 2019. He is doing a workshop in Roanoke on March 12, 2019.</p>	<p>No further action is required</p>
<p><b>VIII. Unfinished Business</b></p>	<p>Bruce wanted clarification again on the VDH/OEMS score. Luke went over this again and explained about the Fiscal Stress Index and how it is calculated.</p>	<p>No further action is required</p>
<p><b>IX. New Business</b></p>	<p>We had a discussion on 100% funding for community college courses. This past cycle, we had a request for 100% funding for a paramedic course. They submitted a proposal but without documentation, justification or explaining their program. They said they had received funding in the past. For several years they got funded without having to do that. They also charge the students to take these classes. Where is the rest of this money going? The consensus was that the college programs should at least pay a portion. RSAF is not responsible for 100% funding of these classes. We also had discussion on another grant that was denied. It was for the Behavioral Health Training class. They too asked for 100% funding. This was going to be a multi-jurisdictional project to help over 4,500 first responders. Again the consensus is that these type of classes should be at least partially funded by the requesting agencies.</p>	<p>No further action if required</p>
<p><b>X. Next Meeting Date and Location</b></p>	<p>Our FARC Quarterly Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 2, 2019 at the Embassy Suites beginning at 1:00 PM.</p>	<p>No further action is required</p>
<p><b>XI. Adjournment</b></p>	<p>This meeting was adjourned by Kevin. All were in favor.</p>	<p>No further action is required</p>