

**Financial Assistance Review Committee (FARC)
Rescue Squad Assistance Fund Quarterly Meeting
Virtual Meeting
March 5, 2021
11:00 AM – 1:00 PM**

Members Present:	Members Absent:	Administration Staff:	Staff/Other Guests:
Kevin Dillard, Chairman		Luke Parker	Gary Brown
JC Bolling		Linwood Pulling	Adam Harrell
Tracy Hanger			
Donna Hurst			
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. He thanked everyone for their continued commitment to the grant program and for their participation in this meeting. The deadline for the RSAF Spring Grant cycle is March 15, 2021 at 5:00 pm. The grants unit will then get the grants out to the OEMS Program Reps, Regional Councils and technical graders. About a month later, the FARC committee will get the grants for their review, grades and comments. The Governor's Advisory Board (GAB) is planning on having in-person meetings starting in May. Once that happens, FARC may be able to have in-person meetings again.	No further action is required
II. Approval of February 2020 Meeting Minutes	The February 5, 2020 RSAF Quarterly Meeting minutes were approved.	No further action is required
III. Travel Reimbursement	There have been concerns about travel reimbursements. JC had brought up some concerns to Kevin and had sent a letter to the State Government about it. JC spoke about the utilization of the cap manual for travel reimbursement. This was also discussed at the last GAB meeting. JC had put in for his travel reimbursement last year. Shared Business Services (SBS) has taken over reimbursements for travel reimbursements, grant reimbursements, Return to Locality reimbursements and scholarship reimbursements. JC was audited (random audits are done from time to time) which was a blessing in disguise. JC would not have seen the new updates and changes to the cap manual that affects travel reimbursements had he not been audited. He received back an amended sheet stating he could only receive 23 cents a mile reimbursement or half of the cost for the rental of a vehicle from Enterprise. He looked at the cap manual for travel reimbursement, which was recently updated, and it stated he could be	There was a motion and seconded that this discussion be put on the GAB's agenda for their next business meeting in May.

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	<p>reimbursed up to 200 miles for travel. JC lives over 300 miles away and that will have a significant impact on not only his allowable reimbursement but committee members from all committees and sub-committees across the State of Virginia. This would impact anyone from Southwest Virginia. The cap manual also states that when traveling in a rental car, you are supposed to put the gas purchased on a State issued gas card. There are no state issued gas cards for volunteers. With the Coronavirus still with us, the vehicles are required to be wiped clean and sterilized after each use. There's no way to know if this is being done or not. The cap manual also is requiring you to leave your personal vehicle at the rental place which is not a secured parking place. No one wants to leave their personal vehicle in an unsecured place and JC feels that should not be a requirement. This is not just a JC Bolling issue. It's an entire State Government issue. JC feels this discourages participation from any Southwest Virginia committee members regardless what committee they sit on. Because of the mileage limitation, it discriminates against the Southwest Virginia area. JC feels in all fairness, this needs to be revisited. We have our EMS Symposium in Norfolk. This will have an even greater impact on a lot more people because of the 200 mile limit. JC would like to sit down with Kevin, Adam and Gary to see if they can come up with a solution to satisfy everybody. Kevin said that JC brought up some good points that need to be addressed. Adam gave FARC an update on where things are now. Since SBS has taken over reimbursements, the Office of EMS has had problems with not only reimbursements for travel but also with grant payments, Return of Locality payments and Scholarship payments. Adam said he agrees with JC's concerns and has tried repeatedly to get answers from VDH over these concerns. Someone in VDH has made an interpretation of policy and we're trying to find answers to this interpretation. Adam's recommendation to FARC was that this become an agenda item to be taken up at the next GAB meeting. Adam will also send a request to OFM and the SBS to have someone present that represents OEMS at that meeting to answer your questions. Hopefully, our Attorney General's (AG) representative will also be present to give a legal interpretation for us. Gary agreed that this should be an agenda item to be brought up at the next GAB meeting for discussion and interpretation. It needs to be resolved.</p>	
<p>IV Equipment Pricing Discussion</p>	<p>Luke has been putting together the RSAF price list as he does every year. He has done a lot of research on different state contracts and purchasing agreements. We've had informal discussions on this but Luke was wanting to get FARC's formal agreement to move forward on doing a statewide contract for EMS vehicles and equipment. Luke pulled up the price list we are using this cycle so everyone could see it. For last year's price list, Luke compared RSAF averages with Ohio short term contracts and the Florida Sheriff's Association. This year, Luke had received so many complaints stating the OEMS price list was severely undercutting the prices that the EMS agencies could actually purchase their awarded equipment for. Luke decided that he needed to incorporate more data when compiling the price list. Luke added the Houston-Galveston area contract which is a contract for a completely outfitted Type I, Type II and Type III ambulances and remounts. Luke also looked at the National Association of State Purchasing Officers for AED's heart monitors and</p>	<p>FARC wants to move forward with considering a State Ambulance Contract and agreed for Luke and OEMS staff to proceed with this. Emergency grants, and hardship grants (80/20 or 100% funding) awarded through RSAF would be required to purchase off these contracts. OEMS has been asked to present FARC with a more formal presentation at our next quarterly meeting in May.</p>

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	<p>chest compression devices contracts. He compared these four contracts or cooperative purchasing agreements as well as a manufacturer's price list from Stryker and Ferno to come up with a contract average. He compared the average price list from those four contracts and the RSAF price list and came up with a price in the middle (average means). It seemed the best way to do it. That is how the 2021 price list is calculated. Kevin thanked Luke for the awesome job he did with the price list. Luke said that he and Adam had preliminary conversations with the Department of General Services to see what they would need from us and from FARC to move forward with this. They were very intrigued with us wanting a state ambulance contract because at this time, there is not a state ambulance contract. Their big question for us is what type of items would FARC like to see on State contract? Luke's recommendation as the Grants Manager and putting all this together for the price list is to start with what we have and go from there. Adam stated that we use to have a state ambulance contract. The reason it went away was that jurisdictions weren't purchasing off this contract. No one was using the contract. When the State does a contract with you, one of the things you have to look at is that people will have to be using the contract to actually purchase not just to compare prices. Some of the discussions that FARC will want to have at some point is what type of requirements would FARC like to utilize associated with this contract? An example would be emergency grants or grants requesting hardship funding. We could put a condition of the grant that says if you are approved for emergency funding or hardship funding, you must purchase this off the state ambulance contract.</p>	
<p>V. Senior Compliance Specialist Presentation</p>	<p>OEMS has hired a Senior Compliance Specialist. He was supposed to give FARC a presentation today but he had a schedule conflict. Kevin wants to invite this person to attend our next FARC quarterly meeting to go over what's been going on since he was hired and what direction they're going in.</p>	<p>Adam said he would make this person available for our next FARC meeting.</p>
<p>VI. Reviewer Training Discussion</p>	<p>Luke stated that FARC is very experienced in reviewing grant applications. Before becoming a member of FARC, most of the committee had reviewed applications prior to that. Luke was wondering about creating training webinars for our other reviewers. These would include things to look at and ways to develop key evaluations and questions as you are going through RSAF applications. Luke is presenting at a research conference for his school on the subject of Grants Management As An Academic Skill of Study. As Luke was preparing for his presentation, he found there is nothing on grants management or standard operating procedures or anything for reviewers. FARC is sort of like pioneers in this respect because you are the first to formalize standards of review for grant applications. FARC agrees that creating training webinars for reviewers is a good thing to do.</p>	<p>Luke will put something together for FARC and see if we can provide a webinar.</p>
<p>VII. Conflict of Interest Filing Procedures</p>	<p>We are going to have an annual conflict of interest filing. Whenever we have a new FARC member come on board, Kevin would like for us to have an in-person presentation from the appropriate person on the conflict of interest filing. Even if we don't have a change to FARC, we could still have a refresher course on this.</p>	<p>No further action is required</p>

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VIII. Review Process Discussion	With FARC's approval, Luke will not schedule an awards meeting this cycle. Instead, he will utilize a survey to obtain from FARC who we need to meet with specifically. Instead of having a meeting where FARC is essentially on trial, having to explain their rationale for why they graded applications the way they did, we will decide which reviewers, groups or individuals we need to talk to if you have specific questions about the application. If you don't have any questions, you would select NO. That would be the end of the survey. If you would like to meet with some of the graders, you would select YES. Then you would be able to select which regional council, program rep or technical grader you would like to meet with. In a nutshell, we will have a forum where FARC would say who they wanted to talk to (if anyone) and Luke would schedule a meeting with the selected group or individuals accordingly.	No further action is required
IX. Unfinished Business	No unfinished business	No further action if required
X. New Business	<p>The technical graders have about one month to review and grade the grant that are assigned to them. This could be anywhere from five to thirty applications. FARC has about one month to review all of the grants. This is usually one-hundred twenty or more. It doesn't make sense that FARC only has a month to grade all of the grants and everyone else has a month to grade only the ones in their area/region. This cycle we will continue to review and grade as we have. Next cycle, we will give the technical graders time according to the number of grants in their area. It generally breaks down to about two hours per grant. By reviewing and grading this way, FARC should have about six weeks to grade instead of the allotted month.</p> <p>Adam told FARC that Gary said this morning that we are planning on holding an in-person symposium in Norfolk this year. We're not exactly sure what that will look like yet. They have started discussions with the hotels and with the City of Norfolk. If the Covid-19 restrictions are still in place and we have to still maintain six feet apart and social distancing, we will have to limit the number of classes we hold and limit the number of attendees</p>	<p>This was unanimously approved by FARC. This will take place for the Fall RSAF cycle. Luke will put everyone on notice about the changes for the next cycle.</p> <p>There will be more information to come as the Office of EMS works through this.</p>
XI. Next Meeting Date & Location - TBD	FARC usually meets the day before the GAB. They are meeting on May 7, 2021. Kevin asked Adam if he knew yet when FARC would meet and he said he didn't. Some committees are still going to do virtual meetings while others are bumping up their meeting or trying to find another venue. Kevin told Adam that FARC would like to have an in-person meeting on Thursday, May 6, 2021.	Luke will follow up with Jackie to see if this time slot is available and report back to FARC.
XII. Adjournment	Kevin thanked everyone for attending. The meeting was adjourned.	No further action is required

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