



MEMORANDUM

To: Whatcom County Council Members
From: Mike Hilley, EMS Manager
Subject: Community Paramedic Interlocal
Date: January 5, 2021

Requested Action:

We are asking the Council to approve an amendment to an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Bellingham Fire Department (BFD) for the purposes of adding the budget amount for the remaining three years of the term as outlined in Exhibit A, Budget. The amendment also allows for both of the Bellingham Community Paramedics to be funded through the EMS Levy. *(On December 8, a contract amendment was brought forward that did not include the correct dollar amount. This is a corrected version of that amendment.)*

Background and Purpose:

Community Health programs are evolving with associated outreach programs that include the Ground Response and Coordinated Engagement (GRACE) team. The Bellingham Fire Department has operationalized a Community Paramedic/Health program over the last six years citing a significant reduction of the overuse of 911 by those enrolled in the program.

The original contract allowed for the cost recovery of one of the Bellingham Community Paramedics (CPMs). This amendment allows for Bellingham CPMs to be funded through the EMS Levy. The Bellingham model has expanded into the county with additional Community Paramedic's and Sheriff's Deputies supported by case workers from the GRACE Team which includes four case management specialists, a community health worker (CHW), a part-time Nurse Practitioner (ARNP), Program Manager and Administrative Assistants. The goal of the program is to direct patients to the right care at the right time in an effort to reduce frequent use of the 911 system for both EMS and Law Enforcement. In March, 2020 BFD requested and gained approval from the EMS Oversight Board to fund both Community Paramedics beginning in 2021. The BFD Community Paramedic commitment is programmed through the life of the current levy as outlined in the amendment and more specifically in Exhibit A, budget.

Funding Amount and Source:

The EMS Levy Fund as budgeted through 2021-2022 biennial budget.