

**CITY OF LAKE STEVENS  
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, January 9, 2018

Lake Stevens School District Educational Service Center (Admin. Bldg.)  
12309 22<sup>nd</sup> Street N.E. Lake Stevens

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m. by Council President Hilt

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT: Councilmembers Kim Daughtry, Gary Petershagen, Kurt Hilt, Todd Welch, Rauchel McDaniel, Brett Gailey (6:06 p.m.) and Marcus Tageant

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: Mayor John Spencer

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: City Administrator Gene Brazel, Community Development Public Works Director Eric Durpos, Human Resources Director Teri Wright, City Clerk Kathy Pugh, City Attorney Grant Weed, Police Commander Ron Brooks (6:12 p.m.)

OTHERS: Ralph Krusey, SERS Director and Craig Boyd, SERS Technical Supervisor

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Mr. Krusey introduced Craig Boyd, SERS Line Supervisor, and said that he and Mr. Boyd are here this evening to present an overview of the past, present and future of SERS. Before beginning, Mr. Krusey distributed a resolution passed on January 4, 2018 by the SERS Board regarding merging with the newly formed Snohomish County 911. The Board has resolved to actively look at changing its governance model from what it currently is to the governance model of Snohomish County 911. This will provide a better representation for the entire county on the SERS Board. If SERS is not acquired by Snohomish County 911, SERS will still move to a governance model that mirrors Snohomish County 911.

Mr. Krusey provided a history of the SERS system, including that it was built in the early 1990's, and he reviewed the system's expansion. The system provides 95% coverage in the suburban/urban area of Snohomish County. Mr. Krusey provided examples of how the SERS system works, including managing critical incidents such as the Oso Mudslide, and other less critical incidents. Currently the system is at capacity and the technology used is now obsolete; the system will not be supported by the manufacturer after 2020. SERS is looking for a way to increase capacity without buying additional 800 MHz frequencies. He said that a new system will provide the benefit of having current technology and being upgradable over time.

Mr. Krusey next reviewed the use of cell phones vs. radio systems for public safety communications. He noted that cell phone communications are not reliable in emergency situations, and in emergencies they are overwhelmed by users. Also, cell phone systems are not as robust as a radio system, and do not have the redundancies that a radio system has that make the radio system reliable in all situations. Additionally, cell phone systems do not have a reliable backup, where the radio towers do have backup power and rerouting capabilities in the case of an emergency. Finally, cell phone coverage is not as broad and consistent as radio coverage.

The current system provides communication with other emergency responders outside the county, and a new system will continue and enhance that communication. Without a new system, SERS will lose that communication ability.

SERS began researching a new system in 2014 by working with a consulting company to determine what is needed and how the current system is working. The conclusion was that the SERS system needs to be upgraded to P25 and that SERS is probably about a couple of years behind other area agencies in upgrading. SERS is one of the last counties to move to a P25 system.

Mr. Krusey said SERS has been working with Snohomish County to do a Request for Proposal (RFP), with all stakeholders involved. He reviewed the RFP process and said proposals are due mid-February. A decision on a vendor will be made in mid-2018, and once funding is secured, SERS will enter into a contract for the design and buildout, with buildout tentatively set for 2020. Mr. Krusey reviewed the timeline for the buildout, saying it will take three to five years to complete.

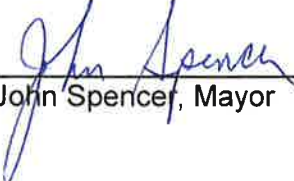
Responding to Councilmember Gailey's question, Mr. Krusey said he is requesting a resolution of Council for the County to fund this project, most likely through a tax. SERS' goal is to get each community to support Snohomish County as the taxing entity for the revenue for a new system. The initial cost of the system is estimated at \$70-75,000,000, but the cost will not be known until the responses to the RFP are received. Federal grant money is not available for this project.

Councilmember Hilt clarified the cost and payment options of either a property tax or a sales tax. Mr. Krusey believes those decisions should be made by Snohomish County and reviewed some of the possible funding sources. Councilmember Hilt noted that a property tax would end after nine years, versus a sales tax which would continue. Councilmember Hilt expressed concerns including that citizens will continue to be paying on this debt into the future, and more funding will be necessary. Councilmember Hilt commented a new system is necessary, but that he is reluctant to support a resolution until the funding and representation issues are worked out county-wide. Mr. Krusey responded there is no way to guaranty the representation, but reminded there is a resolution pending before Snohomish County 911 that would provide that governance structure.

Discussion ensued as to which cities currently have seats on the board, and which cities are not represented. The discussion next turned to how counties are paying for new radio systems, and Mr. Krusey said that King County is using a property tax and Pierce County is using a sales tax.

**Adjourn:**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

  
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John Spencer, Mayor

  
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Kathy Pugh, City Clerk