BACKCOUNTRY SEARCH AND RESCUE
Council Meeting
Tuesday, March 11, 2025
1:00p –3:00p
(6/10/2025 Draft)

Join Zoom Meeting
https://cpw-state-co.zoom.us/j/82406355366?pwd=ocO2jyEeaUs5si8b8GKbDT49zQTf8j.1
Meeting ID: 824 0635 5366
Passcode: 390757

Call to Order:

0:08

I. Welcome and Introduction: Perry Boydstun, Chair

***Council Members Present*:**
Jaime FitzSimons, Summit County Sheriff
Jeff Sparhawk, Executive Director of Colorado Search and Rescue Association
Woody Woodward, Colorado Search and Rescue Association
Brad McQueen, Member-at-Large
Trish Zornio, Member-at-Large
Brent Lounsbury, Emergency Management Coordinator, CPW
Perry Boydstun, BSAR Program Manager, CPW

1:21

II. Public Comment: None

1:42

III. Meeting Minutes: December 19, 2024

Changes Requested:

- **In the posting of the December meeting documents, the December 2024 Meeting Minutes and the accompanying PDF of the Budget Presentation are both entitled, "Meeting Minutes". The PDF name needs to be changed to "Presentation".**
- **On Page 2 of the minutes, the term "Rescuer Gear/Lifeseeker-Artimas" shall be changed to "CHRT-Rescue Tech Gear"**

With these changes, the December 2024 meeting minutes were approved.

5:15

IV. <u>BSAR Council Member/Organization Updates</u>:

- **Lounsbury spoke about CPW BSAR/EM becoming more integrated with DHSEM and opening more lines of communication with DFPC. He has been frequently meeting with numerous DHSEM Field and Emergency Managers throughout the State. He recently met with the Jackson County Sheriff regarding SAR operations, as CPW continues to become more visible as he is trying to grow, develop and build the new CPW BSAR program.**
- **CSAC-No updates**
- **CSAR-No updates**
- **Members-At-Large-No updates**

8:35

VII. <u>BSAR Program Financial/Budget Update</u>:

Perry introduced Patricia Nord, Budget Analyst for CPW Field Services-Financial Services Unit, who gave the following power point presentation:

- **BSAR Agenda Topics:**
  - ***Revenue by Source***
  - ***Fund Balance***
  - ***Schedule 9 Cash Report***
  - ***Granted/Obligated Amount***
  - ***Expenditures/Grants/Allocations***
    - **BSAR fund-FY25: Begins July 1, 2024 through present**
    - **All the data in this presentation was pulled from March 3, 2025**
    - **Cash reports are submitted to the State Legislature, and is viewable to the Public**

The BSAR FY25 YTD revenues and broken out into types:

- **Registrations**
- **Hunting**
- **Fishing**
- **CORSAR Card**
- **Interest (located in the KCW revenue bucket)**

How these revenues are expended are subject to statutory expenditure rules

As of this report, BSAR has received $273,975.25 traditional revenues:

- **$78,305-KCW Interest revenue, which is deposited monthly and calculated by LIBOR interest rates**
- **KCW revenue transfers from the Treasury *after* the $32.5M waterfall, which usually posts in May/June**
- **KCW Commission Q2 report looks healthy, with just over 20M in revenue, which surpassed last year's numbers**
- **SB22-168 (Program money transferred from DOLA to CPW) has $709,754.86 available**

- **HB21-1326-revenue has been expended, which is good because it had a sunset and the money was spent in time**
- **KCW Interest/Traditional Revenues have a fund balance is 3.9M, but this number does not reflect awards/encumbrances/obligated funds which have yet been paid, which is around 1.2M. The unobligated balance (money which is not encumbered and available) is around $2.7M**
- **Revenues remaining at the end of the FY gets reallocated out to the counties**
- **The BSAR Cash Fund Report reflects BSAR's actual costs over the previous two fiscal years, an estimate for the current FY, and the straight-lined cost projections for the next FY. This report must be shown to the public, and comes out when the Governor submits his November 1 budget to the State Legislature and the Joint Budget Committee**
- **Grants and obligations:**
    - **KCW allocations-One advance payment to Dolores county has been issued**
    - **Three more POGG1s have been issued since the report has run, but the chart doesn't reflect these amounts until the payouts are made. Usually, there is about a three week lag from when the award request is approved until it is reflected in the financial reports**
- **Traditional funds (CORSAR cards/BSAR fees from licenses)**
    - **Reflects advanced payment distributions**
    - **$460K obligated/awarded funds**
- **Total BSAR Expenditures:**
    - **CPW spent or obligated around $3.5M**

For future budget presentations, Patricia will provide a link to the reports and charts in advance, accessible on the shared Drive.

***Discussion included*:**

- **Since the balances are continuing to grow, do we have a plan to ramp-up expenditures to match the revenue? Otherwise, the public might think the program is overfunded. This needs to be discussed further, as funds need to be expended that meet the intent of the legislation and the mission of the Program. To be good stewards of this revenue, it must be spent on the Program needs so it isn't placed elsewhere or be "swept" by the Legislature. Fortunately, this fund is low on the prioritization list of government "sweeping"; however, in a crisis, the fund might be reviewed. It would be beneficial to have a spending plan in place.**

31:50

V. Rescuer Gear/Lifeseeker-Artimus:

Discussion included:

- **BSAR needs to provide alternative ways for responders to be compensated for mission essential gear and how these payments can be funded**
- **New/replacement gear is needed for the Hoist Recue Team to Gilpin County**

- **Sparhawk and Woodward recently submitted a proposal addressing this issue:**
    - **CHRT is a collaboration between the Colorado National Guard, CSAR and four Teams, starting after the 2013 floods in Boulder/Larimer and counties. CSAR was brought in around 2015. The National Guard can bring in federal dollars, and CSAR can bring in funds from grants through counties from the traditional SAR fund, and have raised approximately $200K over the years**
    - **Currently working on an annual gear replacement program**
    - **Of consideration is keeping the equipment ownership at the CSAR level, so the program can be more flexible, and easily move equipment from one county to the another**

- **DFPC has a Lifeseeker device on the MMA and indicated the gear works very well. It functions much better on a fixed wing than a rotary wing aircraft**
- **After talks with the MMA personnel, Sparhawk will gather more information before presenting details to the Council**
- **Conversations need to continue about whether this equipment is a good investment. So far, the results have been from tests/demos and not "real world" successes**
- **The mini Lifeseekers are adaptable to drones now, and may be a faster application than the MMA**
- **CPW Air Assets, including four Cessna 182s (Correction – 185s) and a Super Cub, are well positioned throughout the State. Conversations will be held about whether the Asset group would be willing to work with BSAR, as they have some of the same location capabilities as the MMA**

X. <u>BSAR Study Recommendation:</u>

- **Updated BSAR Study – 3rd Party Consultant**
- **Only one Lifeseeker device currently in Colorado**
- **Only effective if subject's cell phone is powered on**
- **Several options available: bolt-on or mobile**
- **Would like someone who is not SAR to look at this study from an external lens to make comments/suggestions**
- **Will discuss more later**

44:55

VI. **<u>Legislative/Regulatory Update:</u>**

- **New/Old Legislation**
- **None that will impact SAR**
- **HB25-1286 protects workers from extreme temperatures, but excludes anyone who is tasked with working outside**

45:42

Rule changes-Surcharge increase:

Discussion included:

- **Conversations about increasing surcharges with stakeholder groups like the Wildlife Committee and Sportspersons roundtable were very positive. More meetings will be held in the future. The feedback received is to put a cap on surcharges for those persons, especially SAR Teams, who register multiple licenses, so the costs are not exceedingly expensive**
- **Agencies can to work together in support of the surcharge increase. CSAR, SAR Teams and Sheriff's can join CPW in advocating for these increases by attending commission meetings, testifying with SMEs and showing solidarity**
- **Feedback will be communicated to the Council from any engagement sessions attended**
- **The number of cards purchased decreased, but the overall revenue increased. A portion of the public wants to contribute to SAR**
- **If the number of CORSAR cards are decreasing, but the revenue is increasing, will this impact revenue for potential reimbursements for the Teams responding to a CORSAR card victim? In other words, will Teams be disenfranchised by fewer CORSAR cards being purchased? Overall, financially it's a state-wide gain, and there are different outlets for reimbursements. The decrease/increase should not be an inhibitor for reimbursements**
- **Sheriffs/counties can still submit for reimbursement under Tier 3, even if the victim doesn't have a CORSAR card**
- **It is preferred for emergency incident reimbursements to be pushed toward a separate emergency fund that is apart from the BSAR funds**

1:01:26

VII. <u>BSAR Program Financial/Budget Report</u>:

- **KCW County Allocation**

Overview: Boydstun presented the KCW budget. $800K from FY25 will be rolled into FY26. The KCW budget is 2.5 M for FY25, and 3.3M for FY26. Direct training and mental health services can be added into FY26. Requests should go thru the Sheriff's Offices for approval. A program designed for a "direct pathway" can help with these requests.

***Discussion included*:**

- **CPW came up with a formula last year for a Universal Application that handles both the traditional and county allocated funding streams. The Universal Application opens May thru June 30th, with approximately $2M this year. Formula basis is:**
  - **Floor**
  - **Population**
  - **Incident Load**
  - **Active Team Members**

- **Volunteer Emergency Incident Hours**

- **It's use is flexible and is on a two-year cycle (July thru June)**
- **In state FY25, 23 of 34 counties submitted budget documents. Two of 23 counties plan to spend funds on mental health services, and other counties have access to mental health services.**
- **Eight reimbursement requests were for UTVs, snowmobiles, trailers, e-bikes, drones, etc.**
- **The existing formula will stay in place for one more year, at which time additional feedback will be reviewed for possible modifications to the process**
- **Data driven surveys completed by Teams will assist the Council in making any changes to the formulas. This has not been started yet, but needs to be implemented**
- **Rather than purchasing primarily big ticket items, an external, focus subgroup that informs the Council could be created to discuss more innovative options in which to utilize the funds. Boydstun shared a document in the Drive folder, and requested it be read. This issue will be discussed at later time.**

1:06:17

b. Traditional YE Distribution

- **The Universal Application opens May thru June 30th and is based on total revenue. Amount is based on total revenue, the average being $500K. The Formula Basis is:**
  - **Floor**
  - **Population**
  - **Incident Load.**
  -
- **It's use is to purchase training and equipment and is on a one-year cycle (September thru August)**

Discussion included:

- **Can the administrative costs of the TEAMs and CSAR be increased in a way that is similar to that of CPW? Some companies have volunteer programs, so it's difficult to reimburse administrative fees. Perhaps they can hire employees (not volunteers)? The original intent in county allocations was that 10% of total allocation could pay a county employee to support a SAR Team. All Teams have administrative costs, and the current allowable spend plan covers administrative costs up to 10% of the allocation for paid county staff, but doesn't allow for other administrative costs. There might be some tweaking required to include more administrative-related reimbursements. Perhaps this can be addressed after the Teams and the Counties have received their essential equipment.**

1:20:24

Emergency Fund Administration-Grand County Helicopter Assist

Discussion included:

- **Boydstun asked the Council what they would need in order to quickly authorize emergency funds paying the $28K helicopter fees for Grand County, rather than going thru the end-of-year process**
- **Boydstun will send the incident report/summary to the council members for review**
- **McQueen said he believes there has been a decent amount of discussion surrounding this incident since December 2024. If there is no opposition expressed from the Council to pay this expense out of emergency funds, McQueen said he strongly supports paying the reimbursement. He feels all options were explored, and using the aviation asset brought the family closure to recover the deceased. He is supportive of the reimbursement and would not want payment to linger**

There was consensus by the Council to pay the reimbursement through the emergency funds. Woodward said all emergency funds should be handled the same way, with a report/summary going out to the council a week prior to a special meeting. The Council does not want this to be the "go to" option every time there is an emergency, but this incident was a very unique situation.

1:41:18

VIII. <u>CORSAR Card/Marketing Update:</u>

Discussion included:

- **There have been some marketing issues, but doing well overall. Incorrect links on the Partners' web page have been fixed, as there were some misinformation going out to the public in posts. There is a similar website not routed thru CPW that goes to an Instagram account and redirects to the wrong website**
- **PIOs need to review their links to ensure they are correct**
- **A number of great marketing efforts for KCW have been accomplished via social media by correcting errors, improving relationships and providing collaborative messaging**
- **Data shows more non-profit and non-counties are participating**
- **April BSAR/CORSAR cards campaign begin on social media**

1:46:20

IX. <u>BSAR Training</u>:

Discussion included:

- **NASAR provides a catalog of certifications, low cost trainings, professional development and requires no membership. Trainings are provided to anyone providing BSAR services in Colorado. Trainers must be certified by the State of Colorado**

- **CPW supported trainings included WSTA and snowmobile workshops throughout the State; Drone/UAV/Emergency driving skills class and Basic Inland Search and Rescue Course (BISC) through AFRCC trainings**
- **A news segment on CSAR and WSTA training was presented**
- **CPW has confirmed the BISC three-day class will be held in Colorado in December 2025, and has applied for the Inland SAR 5 day course to be in Colorado in 2026**

1:56:00
Adjourn:

Next meeting – Tuesday, June 10, 2025, 1:00p-3:00p (Virtual-Zoom)