

# MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY

95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945

PHONE: (415) 878-2690

**DRAFT**

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2009**

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Kinsey at 3:35pm at the Novato Fire Protection District Administration Office, Heritage Conference Room, 95 Rowland Way, Novato.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Steve Kinsey, County of Marin  
Robert Doyle, County Sheriff  
Ken Nordhoff, City of San Rafael  
Jim Berg, City of Novato  
Marc Revere, Novato Fire District  
Jim Irving, Southern Marin Fire District  
Michael Rock, Ross Valley Agency  
Anne Montgomery, Southern Marin City/Town

### Committee Members Absent:

Joe Kreins, City of Novato

### Non-voting Members, Guests/Staff Present

Maureen Cassingham, Executive Officer  
Richard Pearce, Marin County Fire Chiefs Association  
David Rzepinski, Marin County Transit District  
Farhad Mansourian, DPW Director  
Richard Chuck, Project Engineer, DPW  
Denise Wade, Recording Secretary

### A. Consent Calendar

All matters on the Consent Calendar are to be approved with one motion unless a member of the Committee or the public requests that separate action be taken on a specific item.

- 1) Minutes from July 8, 2009 Executive Committee Regular Meeting
- 2) Report from Executive Officer Work Plan Subcommittee – 2009 MERA Operations and Administration Work Plan
- 3) Environmental Consultation Services Contract – Addendum No. 1 with PES Environmental, Inc. – Forbes Reservoir Demolition Project

Doyle stated the minutes from July 8, 2009 reported his absence when he was present. Rzepinski corrected the title of his agency. Kinsey clarified with Mansourian that on page 6, that McLashen supports this concept “subject” to receiving support of the affected agencies. Cassingham noted that item A-3 contained a typographical error and that the project budget balance should be \$9,100 not \$9,600.

M/S/P Revere/ Doyle to approve consent calendar items with the noted changes.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Motion carried.

B. Executive Officer's Report (Cassingham)

- 1) Appointment of Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee and Action on Strategic Planning Facilitation Services Proposal from CBG Communications, Inc.

Cassingham summarized the Board's direction on the composition of the Ad Hoc Committee and the contents of the proposal from CBG. Kinsey said a cost estimate from DPW for technical support services for the strategic planning process had been requested from Mansourian.

Mansourian reviewed CBG's proposal and talked with Robinson to confirm the extent of reliance they will have on DPW for technical information. He estimates 236 hours at a cost of \$35,400. His greatest concern is the affect of this project on his other MERA priority projects. Nordhoff suggested that the action on this matter be deferred until later in the meeting after Mansourian report on other MERA projects.

Upon receiving Mansourians operation reports, Kinsey stated the timeline for strategic planning should take a back seat to the frequencies, grant applications and other projects. Mansourian said he agreed and was very supportive of strategic planning. He will develop a formal proposal for technical services for the Committees' November 12 meeting.

M/S/P Montgomery/Doyle to approve CBG Communication, Inc's. proposal to provide strategic planning facilitation services in the amount of \$24,000.00 as presented with the understanding that the project timeline must be subservient to other pressing projects. Included in the motion was authorization of Cassingham to execute the contract.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Nordhoff noted that in the middle of the strategic planning process, we should know if we can align the plan with MERA's FY 10-11 budget dates.

Kinsey confirmed Pearce's appointment to the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning as the representative of the Fire Chief's Association. Nordhoff noted that the Marin City Managers will appoint a representative on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Doyle volunteered to be the third member of the Ad Hoc Committee. Mansourian will cover the technical services and Cassingham will provide administrative support.

2) Proposed MERA Purchasing Policy and Procedures

Cassingham reported that the MERA Finance Committee of Gaffney, Kreins, Nordhoff and Rzepinski met on August 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss and give input on the development of a proposed purchasing policy and procedures. Novato Fire Protection District policy and procedures were used as a starting point. MERA's General Counsel has reviewed the draft and provided input.

M/S/P Nordhoff/Irving to approve the draft purchasing policy and procedures as presented.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Motion carried.

3) Proposed Revisions to MERA Reserve Funds

Cassingham summarized the MERA Finance Committee review on August 4 of the MERA Reserve Funds. The Finance Committee recommends that the Executive Committee consider recommending to the Board to combine the maintenance and equipment reserves into a Replacement Fund, and from this new fund, create an Emergency Fund of 500,000. Cassingham said with the Executive Committee's approval, a reserves policy including definitions will be developed for consideration at the November 12 meeting.

Rzepinski asked Mansourian if DPW reviewed the definition of the Replacement Fund in Cassingham's staff report. He stated that MERA owns 17 sites which have 10 years useful life. He estimates that it would cost from 12 million to 45 million to replace them in the event of a catastrophe. Nordhoff said the strategic planning process should review and help plan for replacement. He said the elements of the Replacement Fund definition are acceptable and it is a matter of funding the reserve.

M/S/P Nordhoff/Irving to recommend to the MERA Board to combine the maintenance and equipment reserves into a Replacement Fund and, from the new fund, create an Emergency Fund of \$500,000.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Motion Carried.

4) Other Information Items

Cassingham reported that Mathew Moon, MERA's Relationship Manager for the 1999 bonds with the Bank of New York has determined that a permitted withdrawal of excess reserves invested with Rabobank may be possible subject to a termination fee. The bond indenture requires the trustee to review the reserve requirement twice annually which had not been done by the prior Bony Relationship Manager. The invested reserve is over-funded by \$229,712. which could be transferred to the Revenue Fund for debt service. Rabobank has stated that this withdrawal would be subject to a \$26,000 termination fee. Cassingham asked for direction. She

was requested to review this matter with the Finance Committee and bring back a recommendation at the November 12 meeting.

Cassingham said she has reviewed the JPA agreement bonding requirement for the Executive Officer with Regional Government Services, the JPA that contracts her services to MERA. The Finance Committee asked her to confirm her bonding which RGS pays for through Alliant Insurance. The faithful performance/employee dishonesty bond limit is \$1 million.

Kinsey inquired about the need to continue MERA's website and how it is used. Primary users are thought to be internal. Cassingham said she was notified that the County, effective September 1, 2009, would replace Marininfo as website administrators for Marin.org. She noted that instead of creating Board information binders with key MERA documents, she would explore placing those documents, and Board and Committee lists on the website for easier reference and updating.

C. Operations Reports (Mansourian)

1) Report on Additional Frequencies Installation Project

Mansourian stated that Motorola initially quoted \$1.4 million to install the additional frequencies and related equipment. Chuck and Nelson negotiated the cost down to \$1.2 million. On September 16, 2009, Mansourian will meet with Motorola to finalize their quote. Installation will take one year to complete. If Mansourian cannot reduce Motorola costs to the budgeted \$ 1 million for installation and equipment and in order to complete the project on time, he will request special Executive Committee and Board meetings to reallocate funds from the Tomales coverage budget, if needed, and approve the Motorola contract. The Committee, by consensus, agreed to schedule a special meeting to recommend the Motorola contract to the Board on September 30, 2009 at 3:30pm and asked for a special Board Meeting to be scheduled on the same date at 4:00pm for approval of the same.

2) Report on Tomales Site Coverage Project

Mansourian distributed copies of Roberto Associates proposal to provide planning and entitlement services to MERA for the contemplated Tomales telecommunications site. The Board approved \$75,000.00 for these consulting services on July 15. Project due diligence is underway including determining the costs of leasing the property. These analyses are necessary to determine project costs and timeline so the Board can decide whether Tomales becomes a project.

3) Status/Work Statistics Reports (Chuck)

Chuck distributed and summarized his report on "MERA Trunked System Expansion". He said the second round of training has improved radio discipline. Reprogramming for the larger East system preference will help reduce busies. Expanding the trunked system with more channels is scheduled for completion in September 2010. Once this project starts, it must be completed within one year without interrupting the system. The plan is to turn on each channel as soon as it can be done. Removal of the Jail to a non-trunked channel should be done by the end of the

year. The Transit District should be moved by February 2010.

Revere complemented Chuck on his report and the timelines. Chuck said site preference and the additional training alone will have us better prepared for an El Niño year.

4) Other Information Items

Mansourian summarized the effort of Chuck, Nelson and Captain Navarro in seeking grant funds for MERA. The application for \$363,000.00 for 2008 UASI grant funds has been approved. A Cal EMA grant for \$100,000. has been submitted which will save MERA the cost of moving the Jail to a non-trunked channel. \$6.5 million will be requested for a 700MHZ equipment from UASI 2009 grant funding. Application has been made for a Cal Interoperability grant for equipment. Another \$225,000. has been applied for from IECGP. Shelly Nelson has been appointed chair of the North Bay Counties UASI which will provide a stronger voice for Marin County in planning and funding matters. Staff must reprioritize other work to develop grant applications, many times with quick deadlines. He said he will seek the grants first then approach the Committee and Board for a match if needed. Often staff costs meet the match requirements.

Nordhoff asked Mansourian for a brief report what has been applied for, the amounts, and status. Pearce asked him to note what, if any matches are required and what strings may be attached. Mansourian will prepare a table.

Mansourian reported that we are still waiting to hear from the Tiburon Council on the Martha property. As for Stinson Beach coverage, the USAR team is to drop off two satellite phones to test along Highway 1 and he will report back on the outcome.

D. Open time for items not on agenda.  
None to report.

E. Meeting adjourned at 4:45pm.

**NOTE:** Next Regular MERA Executive Committee Meeting-  
Thursday, November 12, 2009 **3:30pm** (day after Veteran's Day 11-11-09)

***AGENDA AND STAFF REPORTS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT  
WWW.MERAONLINE.COM***

cc: Diane Patterson (for Posting)  
MERA Staff  
General Counsel  
Novato City Clerk (w/minutes)

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Maureen Cassingham, Executive Officer